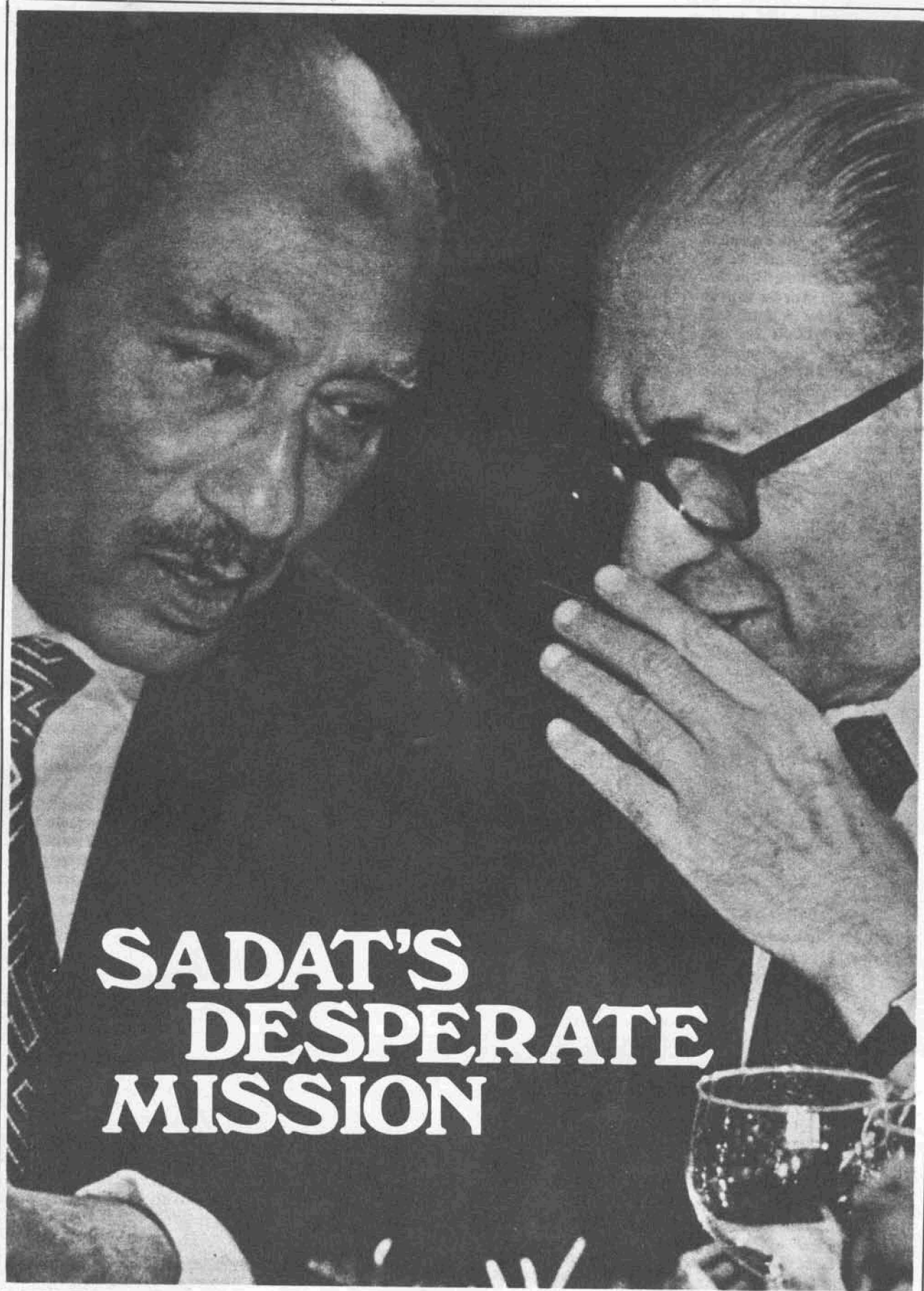


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SADAT'S DESPERATE MISSION

Also: MILITARY IMBALANCE - Arms Transfers to the Middle East

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TABLE of CONTENTS

SADAT'S DESPERATE MISSION, *Joe Stork* p. 3

ARMS TRANSFERS & THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT, *Mike Klare & Dan Volman* p. 17

CURRENT EVENTS

France Attacks Polisario, *Nigel Disney* p. 25

BOOK REVIEW

Agrarian Transition in Egypt, *Walter Carroll* p. 26

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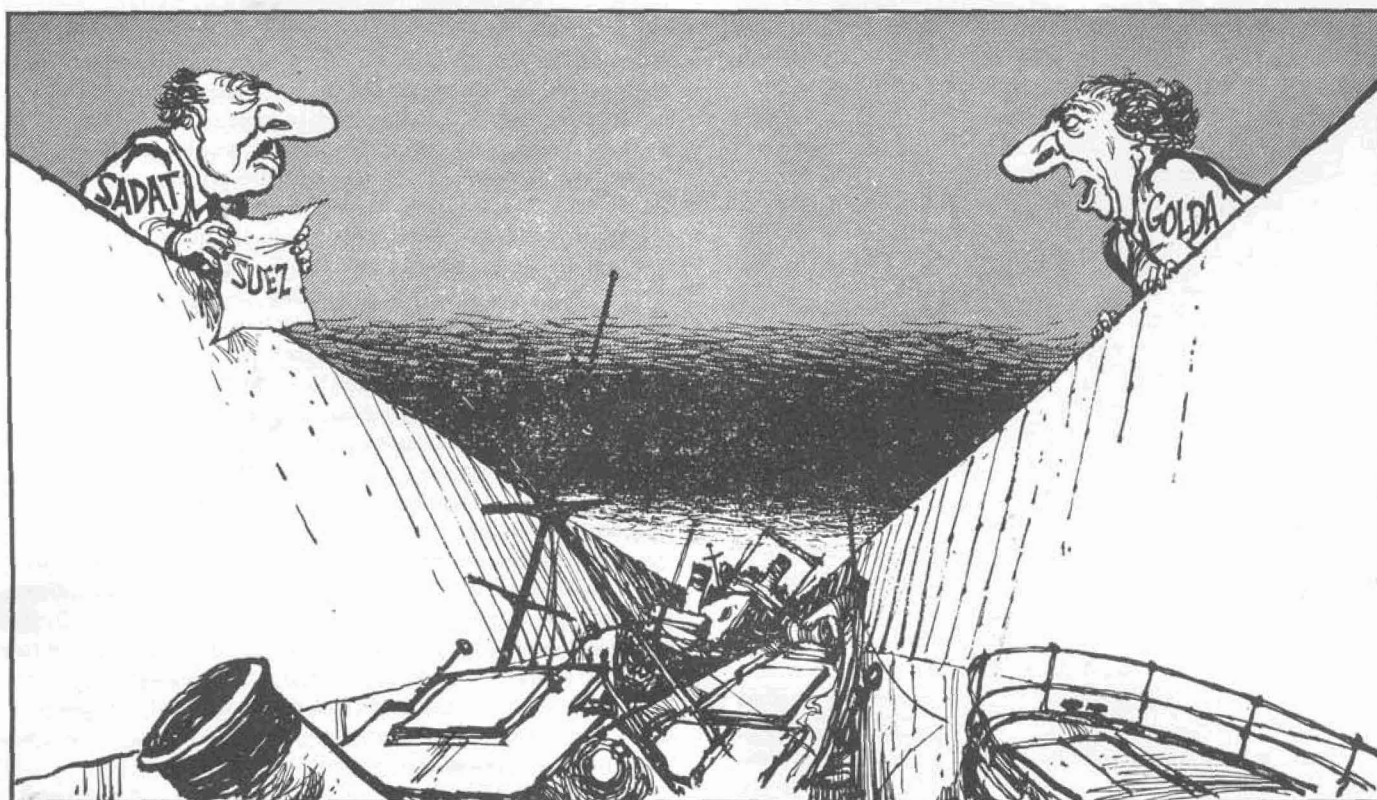
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'The answer is "no"—now, let's hear the suggestion'

SADAT'S DESPERATE MISSION

by Joe Stork

Anwar Sadat is a man in a hurry. His "bold" and "daring" decision to visit Jerusalem, then his "impulsive" recall of his foreign minister from negotiations there, are the latest in a series of *coups de theatre* designed to catapult him over the wall of contradictions that have grown out of the policies of his regime from its first months. The "master of decision" has shown a penchant for isolated decisions consistently aimed at securing United States leverage on Israel for a settlement on minimally acceptable Arab terms. But each of Sadat's decisions has steadily narrowed his future options, requiring each subsequent move to be even bolder, because more desperate.

Sadat was the compromise candidate to head the "collective leadership" established in Egypt after Nasser's death in October 1970. At that time, the US settlement proposals known as the Rogers Plan had brought about a cease-fire in the "war of attrition" along the Suez front. This plan had provided a cover for the devastating Jordanian-led attack, known as "Black September," on the Palestinian movement.

But Israel refused to enter into negotiations towards a more permanent settlement, and was effectively supported by Kissinger and Nixon who, comfortable with the *status quo*, preferred Israeli invincibility to an uncertain peace. In February 1971 Sadat abandoned the insistence of the Arab states on complete Israeli withdrawal by proposing to open the Suez Canal in exchange for only a partial Israeli pullback. The Israelis managed to bog down these proposals as well, insisting on an immediate pledge of non-belligerency.

Sadat's frustration at his inability to produce even the semblance of movement from the intolerable "no war, no peace" situation led him to the conviction that only US pressure on Israel could break the stalemate. While Israel clearly benefitted from this standstill, Egypt was locked into a pattern of economic stagnation and worker and student unrest, producing internal pressures on the regime, corroding its popular base and posing a peril to its very survival. Sadat's first move came in May 1971: on the eve of a visit by Secre-

tary of State Rogers, he staged a palace *coup*, arresting the rest of the "collective leadership." Some of these, like Interior Minister Sharawi Gomaa, controlled the pervasive intelligence apparatus that helped to maintain the regime; others, like Ali Sabry, crystallized opposition to Sadat's US strategy, charging that it involved too many compromises, weakened the anti-imperialist character and legacy of the United Arab Republic (as Egypt was still officially called), and showed no promise of any gains.

On an external level the *coup* represented a signal to the US that the regime was seeking a rapprochement with the capitalist countries. On an internal level it signalled an intent to base the regime on the growing bourgeoisie that included some upper level bureaucrats and military officers, private contractors, and old landowners and merchants who had been curtailed but not dispossessed under Nasser's "Arab socialism." In other words, it was an unambiguous opening to the right both domestically and internationally.

Despite Sadat's overtures, Israel followed its success-honored pattern of delay and refusal, using each "concession"—acceptance of the Rogers ceasefire, resumption of indirect talks through UN mediator Jarring—as a lever to secure greater commitments of weapons and cash from the US. To critics who argued that Israel should respond to Sadat's offer with a small withdrawal from the Canal, the Meir government replied that its tactics had produced Sadat's concessions to date and that continued intransigence would win even more concessions. Foreign Minister Abba Eban put it bluntly: "I believe that the Arab mind is in a state of flux and that the evolution of their thinking has not yet reached its conclusion."¹

Sadat's "year of decision," 1971, ended ignominiously, and 1972 was punctuated with frequent bouts of unrest in the factories and universities. Sadat tried and failed to secure US "neutrality" in the Arab-Israeli conflict. In July 1972 he expelled with great fanfare over seventeen thousand Russian military advisors who had come to Egypt since 1967, especially during the 1969-70 "war of attrition." While presented domestically as a nationalist gesture, the main target was US strategists, especially Kissinger, whose stated goal was the "expulsion" of the Soviet Union from a position of influence in the Middle East. Even more than the *coup* the previous spring, the Soviet expulsion was an unmistakable signal of Sadat's intent to tie Egypt firmly to the capitalist constellation of power. It was bold, visible, unambiguous—and a complete failure.* Edward Sheehan comments that

he must have known that the expulsion would be perceived as another cry for American help, and he as a hapless gambler who in casting away his most potent card supposed he might at last induce Nixon and Kissinger to hasten to his rescue.

They did not.²

Sadat began preparations for another war once the failure of the Soviet expulsion was obvious, although the final decision probably awaited the shabby treatment accorded to Egypt by Nixon and Kissinger in the first months of 1973. The pattern of sweet talk for the Arab "moderates" and arms for Israel left no alternative. Faced with mounting unrest among students and workers and the US's unwillingness to push Israel into serious negotiations, Sadat undertook another bold

move: the October war. The outcome, while militarily ambiguous, was interpreted as a clear political victory. The convergence of the struggle for control of oil resources by the OPEC regimes and the national and class struggles in the Arab states impressed upon the US the need to expand and "stabilize" its political base in the area. No longer would Israeli military hegemony be a sufficient anchor for US policies and interests. Henceforth US interests would have to rest on the twin pillars of Israel and Arab reaction, in the form of an organic alliance between Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Thus the US, represented by Kissinger, responded to Sadat's opening by manipulating Israel into a position where it had to negotiate a token withdrawal from the Canal front.

But US pressure on Israel to concede occupied territory would still be limited and dependent on immediate pressures from the Arab side: an upsurge in hostilities; threats of war.* Israeli strategy remained fixed. As Prime Minister Rabin expressed it in December 1974, Israel's object is to buy time over the "seven lean years" when US and Western dependence on Arab oil could produce pressures for real concessions. 1975, with President Ford needing no economic disruptions, especially in relations with the oil producers, and 1976, the presidential election year, were crucial. Rabin foresaw that the price of avoiding pressures for major concessions over these two years would be a second Sinai disengagement: "If our plan is to gain a space of a few years, I would not say that I am unprepared to take the road of military settlement."³

The US and Israel realized that their views of an ultimate settlement, especially of the Palestinian question, were irreconcilable with Arab demands. But they could and did agree on a minimal approach—the Sinai accords. When Israeli political posturing and squabbling caused the breakdown of these talks in March 1975, Kissinger spared no words in reminding the Israelis "that US foreign policy must do its utmost to protect all its interests in the Middle East" of which "the survival and well-being of Israel" is only one. The Israelis responded. As the ever-eloquent Abba Eban put it: "We must think of our four passes: the Mitla and the Gidi, and the passes of Pennsylvania Avenue and Capitol Hill. The latter sites are not inferior when it comes to our security."⁵

Sadat made unilateral gestures at several points in the Sinai negotiations, in sharp contrast to the Israelis who exacted an enormous package of advanced weapons and military aid in return for their grudging acquiescence. Sadat decided to open the Suez Canal irrespective of an agreement with Israel, on June 6, the eighth anniversary of the Israeli bombardment that had closed it. Today Sadat brags that this move "really put the Israelis in a tight spot."⁶ but in fact it took many more, less spectacular concessions—made over the objections of Foreign Minister Fahmy and War Minister Gamassy—before the Sinai Accord was finally signed on September 1, 1975.⁷ In return for a 30-mile withdrawal Israel got a package of arms sophisticated enough to devastate Egyptian defenses regardless

*At the time of Kissinger's first visit to Cairo, right after the war in 1973, Mohammad Hassan Heikal prepared a memorandum for Sadat based on Heikal's conversations with Kissinger, in which he noted that Kissinger "comes from a school which believes that the truth is what we see at this moment, and not what we think or believe as a consequence of what has happened before," and that "the facts of power take precedence over all other factors in calculations relative to crisis." He also doubted "that there is an American guarantee that we can accept against Israel. If there is an American guarantee, I do not know what assurance there is for it except comprehensive Arab strength—political, economic and military." (Sheehan, 59-60) For this and subsequent advice, Heikal lost his job. Kissinger kept his, and when Carter was elected there were reports that Sadat had asked Kissinger to serve as his advisor.

*Kissinger is reported to have responded with astonishment to news of the expulsion: "Why has Sadat done me this favor?" he asked his aides. "Why didn't he get in touch with me? Why didn't he demand of me all kinds of concessions first?" (Sheehan, *The Arabs, Israelis and Kissinger*, p. 22)

of the truce line. "The US . . . installed a warning system for the last war and provided weapons for the next."⁸ The negotiations accomplished the primary objective of effectively removing Egypt from the level of military confrontation. This was consecrated in Article One of the Accord declaring that the conflict "should not be resolved by military force."⁹ It was only a short step from this to Sadat's "no more war" pledge in Jerusalem.

It took Sadat two years and two months to get from the Sinai passes to the Knesset in Jerusalem. US provision of precision-guided munitions provided the base for the Israeli military superiority that, along with Sadat's alienation of his Soviet suppliers, has left Sadat no military option today.* The "procedural" difficulties over PLO representation that Israel has used to block a Geneva conference have an equivalent in the secret annex to the Accords whereby the US "undertakes not to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization nor to hold political talks with it." Perhaps most importantly, a minimal degree of Arab unity, which had provided the basis for the Arab gains in the October war and its aftermath, was severely ruptured by the Sinai Accords. The main basis for further pressure on Israel and the US was sacrificed for a short-term agreement whose main purpose, from Sadat's perspective, was to ratify and refurbish his "American strategy."

Sadat's need to reassert the validity of his "American strategy" was dictated by the precarious situation in Egypt. The economic and social structure of the country was crumbling at the feet of his regime. Demonstrations and riots by workers and students surfaced again in 1974 and increased in tempo and severity through 1975 and 1976, finally culminating in the uprising of January 1977. The Sinai Accord represented Sadat's political down payment for the foreign investment and aid necessary to salvage the Egyptian economy.

The Sadat regime's "Open Door" economic policy has from the very beginning represented an integral part of its political turn to the US to resolve the national question. Its expression and implementation did not come until 1974, after the "Hero of the Crossing" had amassed the necessary political stature to take on the vast public sector apparatus and interests established under Nasser. Just as Sadat expected the US to respond to his anti-Soviet moves with pressure on Israel, so too did he expect, "in a straightforward calculation of cause and effect,"¹⁰ that declared readiness to abandon "socialism" for an openly capitalist road would produce an inflow of direct corporate investments and financial aid in monumental sums from the US and the reactionary oil producers.*

The failure of Sadat's strategy to produce results on the political level has been sharply compounded in the economic domain. The initial rush of corporate executives and pronouncements by US Treasury and Commerce officials produced the delusion of success, but when the *muzak* stopped not a single significant contract had been signed. Meanwhile, Soviet aid dropped off sharply and was not matched by increases from the US or the Arab oil producers. In 1974 bank credits more than doubled to \$2.7 billion. The cost of subsidies on basic food items is reflected in the climbing deficit of the

*See "The Arms Balance" by Klare and Vollman on p.17 for details of US military supplies to the Middle East.

*An excellent brief survey of the domestic impact of Sadat's policies is Marie-Christine Aulas, "Sadat's Egypt" *New Left Review* 98 (July-August, 1976). MERIP takes this belated opportunity to cite this article as the source of the box entitled "Rural and Urban Difficulties in MERIP Reports 56, p. 9.



Supply Authority: LE 11 million in 1972; LE 89 million in 1973; LE 322 million in 1974; LE 493 million in 1975. When the Saudi and Kuwaiti money did come through, there were plenty of strings attached: rigorous control of the Egyptian economy by the international lending agencies. Responding to these pressures, Sadat appointed a team of economic policy makers who, like the international bankers, demanded an end to subsidies on basic food items.*

The result of these measures was the popular explosion in January 1977. The riots brought the regime some time; Saudi Arabia and the US responded with more funds and less conditions, as they could hardly sit back and let Sadat be swallowed up in the political turbulence. But the January riots have another lesson: Sadat has virtually no room to maneuver domestically to make the "Open Door" a success. He simply cannot satisfy the demands of the international bankers by squeezing the workers and peasants harder. By the same token, serious reforms and restrictions on the excesses of the new and old bourgeoisie would be politically suicidal.

This meant that Sadat had to deal in the external, or foreign policy, arena. Here, too, his options were limited. He had already played out his hand against the Soviet Union in a series of steps that left him little to show for his pains. After January Sadat endeavored to promote himself for a key role in US strategy in Africa as well as the Middle East. After hosting the Arab-African summit conference in February, he proclaimed his readiness to counter Soviet advances in Ethiopia, and dispatched advisors and supplies to Zaire for the conflict in Shaba province.* But Sadat's weak position at home lessened his credibility as an effective bastion of counterrevolution in Africa. One conclusion was inescapable: the deteriorating economic situation could not be reversed independently of a settlement with Israel, and an acceptable settlement would require the active help of the new American administration.

THE YEAR OF DECISION

This had to happen in 1977. In the US presidential election, candidates Ford and Carter tripped over themselves to flash their rhetorical credentials as supporters of Israel. Kissinger, Sadat's "dear friend Henry," was leaving and the Egyptian leader would have to ingratiate himself anew with the incoming administration. 1978 would bring new Congressional elections in the US, making it hard to get the necessary leverage against Israel. 1977 would have to be a "year of decision." Even before taking office Carter said that he saw "a fine opportunity for dramatic improvements."¹¹ Less than a week after the inauguration, Secretary of State Vance announced a trip to the region, persuaded by Kissinger that only a negotiator of his stature could elicit genuine negotiating positions from the parties.¹² "It is terribly important that progress be made," Vance said before leaving, "and that it be made in 1977."¹³

The question of Palestinian representation was the chief obstacle to the resumption of peace talks in Geneva. After

*For a full discussion of the economic crisis and the role of the international banks and agencies, see "Bailing Out Sadat" in *MERIP Reports* No. 56. On the failure to attract major investments, see the documents and discussion in *MERIP Reports* No. 43.

*For documents of the summit, see *MERIP Reports* No. 56. For a discussion of Sadat's aid to Mobutu in terms of his support within the Egyptian armed forces and his eagerness to please the US and Saudi Arabia, see Marie-Christine Aulas, "Relations Difficiles Entre Le President Sadate et L'Armee Egyptienne," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, June, 1977.

the Sinai Accord, Egypt and Syria competed for patriotic credentials by demanding UN Security Council debates to which the PLO was invited. Israel refused to attend these meetings, and it took an isolated US veto to defeat a resolution recognizing the PLO's right to represent the Palestinians at Geneva and putting the question of a Palestinian state explicitly on the Geneva agenda. But this apparent diplomatic strength of the PLO was undermined throughout 1976 by the vicious and prolonged war in Lebanon, which began with Phalangist attacks on Palestinian camps and positions and ended with Syrian armed intervention against the PLO in the summer and fall. Thus, although the Palestinian question was firmly at the top of the diplomatic agenda for 1977, the PLO's vulnerability to pressures from Syria, Saudi Arabia and Egypt left it quite subordinate to those states in the formulation of and commitment to negotiating positions. Syria's leverage over the PLO drew the attention of the new Carter administration to bringing Syria (and the Palestinians) into Geneva negotiations. Sadat, although he was most eager to see a resumption of negotiations, felt constrained to move only in full coordination with Syria and Saudi Arabia.

The new administration's push for a comprehensive settlement through the Geneva format would require some pressure on Israel, which held fast to the strategy of delaying negotiations in order to wear down Arab demands and to avoid dealing with the core issues of the occupied territories and the Palestinians. Since Sadat's desperate need for a settlement insured Egypt's participation, administration efforts concentrated on convincing the Syrians that their interests would be served at Geneva. The Administration also hoped to flush out Palestinian "moderates" to circumvent Israeli refusal to deal with the PLO. On the eve of his departure Vance said that he would explore "in depth" reports of "moderation in the Palestinian position,"¹⁴ and in Israel he explicitly called on the PLO to revise its charter to recognize Israel's right to exist. In Egypt Sadat conveniently suggested that the Palestinians link themselves with Jordan prior to negotiations, but Syria resisted this, asserting that such links should not be preconditions to PLO participation.

Over the next two months Middle Eastern leaders trooped to Washington for talks with Carter. Carter utilized the occasion of Rabin's visit to sketch a settlement scenario which included almost total withdrawal but allowed Israeli military forces beyond the final borders over a defined period, pending "stabilization" of the new peace. A few days later, in Clinton, Massachusetts, he dropped his remark about a Palestinian "homeland." But Israeli anger and Palestinian satisfaction were quickly reversed under White House "clarifications."

When Sadat arrived in Washington in early April he pressed for US support of a Palestinian state as an essential ingredient of any settlement. Ignoring any problems he had with Carter's concept of Israeli "defensive lines" inside Arab territory, Sadat sought to align himself with Carter by agreeing to the goal of normalization of relations with Israel, not merely an end to the state of war. When Carter met with Assad in Geneva in early May, he re-emphasized the Palestinian question: "There must be a resolution of the Palestine problem and a homeland for the Palestinians." Carter was particularly solicitous towards Assad:

This is a year when we are blessed with strong and moderate leaders in the Middle East region. I believe that it is a year of hope for substantial progress.¹⁵

Simultaneous to this spring ritual was a minor struggle between the administration and Congress over Israeli priority to high technology weapons, co-production rights and aid. Vance met Israeli Foreign Minister Allon in London after the Assad meeting to reassure the Israelis that there would be no imposed settlement and no diminution of Israeli access to US arms and technology. Carter at the same time was pressed by Congress to announce that Israel would continue to receive "special treatment" in its arms purchases and co-production arrangements. This encounter had all the earmarks of an Israeli effort to show the strength of Congressional support lest Carter be getting ideas of "imposing" a settlement.

Saudi Crown Prince Fahd's visit to Washington on May 24 came right after Israeli elections brought the Likud to power. Fahd had hosted Sadat and Assad the week before to discuss the question of the "oil weapon" and the need for US pressure on Israel, but he publicly confined himself to praise for Carter's endorsement of a Palestinian homeland and optimism that the US would use its "tremendous" moral and material strength to bring about a settlement.¹⁶ At a news conference immediately following Fahd's departure, Carter remarked that the US expected Israel to make withdrawals from the West Bank, a direct response to Begin's post-election vows never to return the West Bank to Arab control.

The period leading up to Begin's visit to Washington in mid-July was replete with contrasting signals from the Administration. Official statements affirming the need for Israeli withdrawal on all fronts alternated with reassurance through the President and Vice-President of US commitment to the security of Israel, endorsement of the Israeli interpretation of peace as full normalization and denial that military supplies would ever be used to pressure Israel. Denial of co-production rights on specific high-technology weapons systems was counterpoised to substantial weapons sales. The resulting political controversy led Carter, at the end of June, to declare a moratorium on further official comments on the settlement question until after Begin's visit. This left a statement of June 27 as the last official word: Begin must commit Israel, at least privately to Carter, to significant withdrawal on the West Bank as well as Sinai and the Golan.

Carter violated his own moratorium, however, during a meeting with forty prominent American Jewish leaders. Carter's assurances of undying devotion and commitment to Israel's security failed to head off an unrelenting stream of criticisms that administration policy favored the Arab side and affirmations that the American Jewish community would fully support Begin's refusal to deal with the Palestinians. When Begin arrived in mid-July, the expected confrontation with Carter never materialized. Begin unveiled a "secret peace plan" that provided for withdrawal from much of the Sinai and some of the Golan, and "local autonomy" for the West Bank. Discussion in depth or detail was avoided; there was no effort to secure Begin's commitment to anything beyond the studied ambiguity of UN resolution 242, or to act on the strong language of the June 27 statement. Administration officials admitted that Carter's forecast of a Geneva session by October could not be reconciled with Begin's actual proposals. Begin's legalization of new settlements, upon his return to Israel,

elicited no direct US criticism. Carter merely restated the US view that such settlements were illegal and "not helpful" to peace.

Carter's failure to challenge the validity or utility of Begin's "peace plan" or to denounce the settlements brought out differences between Egypt and Syria over Palestinian representation. When Vance arrived in Egypt on the first stop of his August round in the Middle East, Sadat displayed typical willingness to fudge the question, declaring that there were "alternatives" to the PLO. In Syria, President Assad held to the position of no Geneva without the PLO, although he hinted that the PLO might be willing to be absent if there were iron-clad assurances that Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and a Palestinian state would come out of the negotiations. Assad further rejected Sadat's suggestion of US-sponsored "working groups" to prepare for Geneva, seeing this as a flagrant attempt to skirt the question of Palestinian representation.

On this trip, Vance carried US proposals for Palestinian participation (including some low-level PLO representatives), a trusteeship and referendum plan for the West Bank and Gaza, and co-phased withdrawal and normalization stages between the confrontation states. He apparently discussed in detail with the Arab leaders proposed demilitarized zones, electronic early-warning stations, and other security aspects of a settlement. His concerted effort to finesse the PLO representation question fell apart when it became clear that all the PLO would gain from public recognition of Israel and acceptance of Resolution 242 would be talks with the United States but no guarantee of sitting in Geneva.¹⁷

Vance's efforts to lay the groundwork for Geneva clashed head-on with the Begin government's reversal of Israeli policy and refusal to discuss "the contents of peace talks." Begin disregarded Vance's report that the Arab states were ready to go to Geneva without the PLO if Israel accepted the principles of withdrawal and Palestinian rights, and publicly regaled his guest with a diatribe comparing the PLO to the Nazis. In private discussions the Israelis reiterated their refusal to give up any West Bank territory or to negotiate with the PLO regardless of any revisions it might make in its charter. One "senior Israeli advisor" confided that chances for Geneva in 1977 had become "very narrow."¹⁸ Israeli intransigence was not directly challenged by Vance during his visit, but apparently came as no surprise. Just prior to his arrival there, the *New York Times* reporter travelling with Vance wrote in unusually categorical language:

If the Israelis stick to the Begin plan and refuse to make commitments before Geneva, the US will make public a "Vance plan" or a "Carter plan" outlining what it believes to be the essential elements of a peace package. The Americans think that Mr. Begin, who must rely on a narrowly-based coalition in parliament, cannot afford a major dispute with the US, particularly if the argument is over the elements of a peace plan that seems to be equitable.¹⁹

It seems reasonable to infer that something like this was communicated to the Arab leaders. Arab foreign ministers meeting the first week in September agreed on the Egyptian-Saudi proposal for a "firm but flexible" line at the coming UN General Assembly. But there was an "almost explosive impatience" among the other states with this pro-American stance. "I think this is the last chance for the moderates to

¹⁶There had already been some conflict with the Administration over Israeli oil drilling off the Sinai coast, the sale of Kfir jet fighters (with General Electric engines) to Ecuador, and the rescinding of the Ford administration decision to sell concussion bombs to Israel (see *MR* No. 54).

While the international media focused on crowds cheering Sadat on his visit to Jerusalem, the Egyptian security police were working overtime rounding up dissenters. Dozens of Palestinians were deported, and hundreds of Egyptians who oppose Sadat's policies were thrown in jail. Prominent among this left opposition is the noted Egyptian colloquial poet Ahmed Fouad Negm. Born in 1929, Negm never had any formal schooling, but worked during his childhood as an agricultural wage laborer. At 16, Negm was employed by the British Army in the Canal Zone. After 1951 he became active in the Egyptian workers' movement and began to write poetry.

Negm is best known for his collaboration with the blind singer Sheikh Imam Issa. Since 1967 their poems and songs have been closely linked with the Egyptian student and workers movement; together they have been described as "the conscience and voice of the Egyptian masses." As artists, Negm and Imam have existed on the periphery of

official "popular" Egyptian culture, their work being circulated primarily by word of mouth and smuggled cassette tapes. The Egyptian government has tried to buy off Negm and Imam, offering regular radio and television programs if they write "acceptable" songs. But Imam and Negm refuse. They continue to live in poverty, with the majority of the Egyptian people for whom they make their music. Their more than 200 songs deal with the everyday life of workers and peasants, the Palestinian resistance, the decadence of the Egyptian and Arab ruling classes, and popular struggle in the rest of the world, such as Chile and Vietnam. For their music and personal commitment to the Egyptian popular movement, Imam and Negm have been jailed on an almost annual basis.

This "Call" issued by Negm was smuggled out of prison and then out of Egypt. His voice speaks eloquently for the thousands of political prisoners in Egypt.

—Nadime Lachine

A CALL TO THE MASS OF THE EGYPTIAN PEOPLE AND TO WORLD DEMOCRATIC FORCES, LEGAL ORGANIZATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEES FROM THE EGYPTIAN POET AHMED FOUAD NEGM

As a continuation of the repressive policies exercised by the ruling class state in Egypt against the popular movement and all honest, patriotic voices, and in keeping with the road of treason that it is treading—the latest (but not the last) step being the traitor's humiliating visit to Israel, and the policy of starving the popular masses by the cancellation of food subsidies—as a continuation of all these policies and in continuity with its oppressive measures, the state security police arrested me in the dawn of January 22, 1977. A large number of their agents (armed to the teeth) attacked my private residence and removed me from my sick bed despite the extremely cold weather. I was accused of inspiring the entire January uprising (from Alexandria to Aswan) and was placed in Tora prison. There followed eight months of imprisonment without trial in a system supported by the unholy alliance of the Attorney General, the repressive police and bribed, dishonest judges. After eight months, I obtained a court decision for my release, but this was not to the liking of the President, so he objected to the court decision—one of the advantages of the supremacy of the law in Egypt! I obtained a second court order for my release from one of the few honest judges, and was released on September 4, 1977.

Slightly over two months later the same repressive state security police kidnapped my wife, Azza Balba, and me on the street on the morning of Wednesday, November 16, 1977. We were forced to go to the State Security Police Headquarters, where we were kept under heavy guard on two isolated seats without food or drink for 32 hours, while they arranged permission for our arrest from the Attorney General. On Thursday, November 17, they took us to the Attorney General to carry out mock investigations—no charges were made. At midnight my wife was taken away—I do not know to what destination—and five university students and I were taken to Abdeen Police Station. We were kept there under sub-human conditions for 48 hours—sleeping on asphalt without mattresses or blankets, and without food or water. On the morning of November 19, we were packed into a truck, not even

worthy of transporting animals, and driven to Abou Zabal prison, 30 km. from Cairo. The prison authorities there would not accept us because the prison was already overcrowded with honest, patriotic people! We were herded back into the truck and taken to Istinaf prison in the center of Cairo, where we were also refused for the same reason! Finally, we were taken to Tora prison, on the outskirts of Cairo, and put into disciplinary cells. There we found another 15 patriotic Egyptian democrats living in the most awful conditions while they waited to face military courts—at the personal wish of the President—another point scored for the supremacy of the law in Egypt!

We are now imprisoned in Tora prison, living four to a cell of 2 m. x 3 m., without ventilation or daylight. These cells are a haven for rats and cockroaches and all kinds of insects. Despite the extreme smallness and humidity of the cell, it contains as a means of livelihood two buckets—one for water and the other for human waste, which increases the likelihood of catching some disease. In addition, we are deprived of all medical care, are suffering from malnutrition, and are denied any contact with the outside world—no radios or newspapers. We are also prevented from seeing our lawyers and families, although we have been under arrest for varying lengths of time. They close these graves on us 21 hours a day. We face torture and humiliation at the hands of the prison manager who is one of the well-known princes of torture in Egypt.

Because of all this, and in spite of the continuous deterioration of my health, I declare the start of my hunger strike in solidarity with my comrades in this prison and in the face of this inhuman repression and incredible treatment and in defense of our humanity. From this stance I consider all democratic, honest forces in Egypt and world-wide humanely responsible to stand with and support the 21 political prisoners in Tora prison and all other political prisoners—including my wife—in Egypt's other oppressive state prisons (I have been imprisoned in all of them and know their conditions are no better than in Tora prison). I call on the great Egyptian people to continue its victorious struggle against all policies of treason, oppression and starvation.

Long live the struggle of the great Egyptian people!
Long live the solidarity of all democratic and progressive forces in the world.

Ahmed Fouad Negm



The following excerpt was taken from an untitled poem, written by Ahmed Fouad Negm in 1968, in a collection of poems entitled *I'Yun Al-Kalaam (Eyes of the Word)*.

*The drones dwell
in Zamalek.*
To describe their life
You would say—
Life in our quarters is not so.
You can see them
Downtown
When a shiplike car
Cruises by.
Their asses are made of dough
Their bellies are fat
Their skin shines
Their brains are thick
Their teeth are chisels
They cut through the ice
Whether hot or cold
They eat steel.
As long as the river flows
From the Said†
Their incomes inflate,
Their bellies inflate*

*The poor dwell
In the slums.
Their day is a cloud,
Their night is tears.
Feeble arms,
But with some strength,
That turn the dry land to green.
The machine made in Cairo
Its operator doesn't tire.
He can't eat, he can't even starve.
You, the poor of our country—
The peasant, the worker,
The lubricant of the water wheel,
The coal of the factories,
The producer, the makers of well-being,
The sweetest,
The wise, the content—
Don't tire your minds with politics.
Mind your business.
In earnestness and enthusiasm
Teach your kids
The virtue of contentment
Because, of course, we are
The slaves of fate.
Your bread, my bread, and the bread of dogs
Is a matter to be postponed till the day of judgment.*

*Zamalek is a bourgeois district of Cairo.
†The Said is Upper Egypt.

show what if anything America can produce in the way of bringing Israel to account for its aggressive policy of annexation," said one participant aligned with the "moderates."²⁰

Dayan was the first of the Middle East foreign ministers to see Carter and other officials in Washington in September. A few days before his arrival the State Department issued policy statements asserting that "the Palestinians must be involved in the peacemaking process. Their representatives will have to be at Geneva for the Palestinian question to be solved," and that a "single Arab delegation deserves serious consideration as a way of resolving issues that have arisen concerning participation in a Geneva conference."²¹ The talks with Dayan produced reluctant Israeli agreement to this proposal, but with the stipulation that no PLO delegates be included and no negotiations take place with the unified Arab delegation.

This familiar controversy over the Palestinian role took place against a background of escalating fighting in southern Lebanon. The Israeli army actively participated in a right-wing Lebanese attack on the village of Khiam designed to prevent implementation of the truce and troop withdrawal plans formulated under Syrian pressure. The united Palestinian-Lebanese forces held on to Khiam, but the attack had the effect of absorbing Palestinian energies at this time and reminded all the parties that the tinderbox of southern Lebanon could be easily ignited to serve larger Israeli interests.

The PLO sent word to Washington with Egyptian Foreign Minister Fahmy that it would agree to a single Arab delegation if it received a separate invitation, and that it was awaiting clarification of Carter's conception of a Palestinian homeland. A PLO spokesman, Basel Aql, said it would agree to "confederate" links with Jordan once Palestinian sovereignty is recognized.²² In a September 29 press conference, Carter reiterated his view of the US role ("We're not just an idle observer") and the need for "adequate Palestinian representation." He clarified what the US was offering to the PLO in return for public recognition of Israel:

... then we will begin discussions with the leaders of the PLO. We are not giving them any further assurance of that, because we're not trying to prescribe the status of the PLO itself at Geneva ... I can't and have no inclination to give the PLO any assurances other than we will begin to meet with them and to search for some accommodation and some reasonable approach to the Palestinian question ...²³

The PLO responded formally that only a new Security Council resolution explicitly stating "the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, statehood and return to their homes and property" would be the basis for its participation in peace talks.²⁴

THE SOVIET-AMERICAN STATEMENT

The slow and tortuous pace of negotiations merely to set up a Geneva meeting—a pace effectively set by Israeli tactics—forced the Carter administration to devise a means of hastening the process. When Vance met with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko at the UN on September 30, he remarked to reporters that "both of us believe very strongly that we should use our utmost effort to bring about a Geneva conference before the end of the year." In a move harking back to the August hints of a "Carter plan" or "Vance plan," the two

countries released a joint statement the next day. It stressed that "vital interests" of the peoples of the Middle East "urgently dictate ... a just and lasting settlement" that is "comprehensive, incorporating all parties concerned and all questions," specifically "including such key issues as withdrawal of Israeli Armed forces" from the occupied territories, "the resolution of the Palestinian question, including insuring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people," and "termination of the state of war and establishment of normal peaceful relations on the basis of mutual recognition." The document specified international guarantees, demilitarized zones and a UN troop presence to secure the borders agreed upon, and called for "legal and contractual formalization of the decisions" worked out by "representatives of all the parties ... including those of the Palestinian people."

For the United States, the statement served to enlist the Soviet Union directly in the Geneva project, specifically to pressure Syria and the PLO to moderate their preconditions. It also represented an alternative to the Arab demand for a new Security Council resolution that would expressly recognize Palestinian rights and supplant Resolution 242. This interpretation is supported by the absence of any reference in the statement to those earlier Security Council resolutions. The Palestinians responded positively, calling the statement "a genuine effort ... to insure just and permanent peace."²⁵

Israeli officials quickly labelled the statement "not acceptable."²⁶ They objected to the implications of an "imposed" settlement and complete withdrawal from the territories, but their paramount fear was the recognition of "Palestinian rights," a concept anathema to Israel and the Zionist movement. "It carries by implication the foundation of a Palestinian state," declared one official. "It suggests the beginning of a process that is bound to cause the destruction of Israel."²⁷ An Israeli spokesman referred to the previous UN resolutions, 242 and 338: "We hang onto those with all our strength because they say nothing about the Palestinians."²⁸

The storm of criticism against the joint statement from American Zionists and cold warriors objecting to the Soviet involvement—along with the Israeli threat not to participate in a Geneva conference called under the terms of the joint statement—forced the administration to back down. Although the statement was never repudiated or disavowed, it was effectively superceded by the "working paper" produced in a long night of negotiations between Carter, Vance and Dayan in New York a few days later. Based on an American draft already circulating among the parties, this paper reflected Dayan's success in eliminating any reference to the PLO. Restating the proposal for a pan-Arab delegation, the "working paper" followed Israeli insistence that negotiations would take place only on a bilateral, state-by-state basis. The Palestinian question would be "discussed" (not negotiated) by Israel with a joint delegation including Egypt and Jordan (but not Syria) and West Bank Palestinians (but no PLO representatives). The "working paper" expressly reduced the Palestinian role to a ceremonial one: in the words of one "senior" US official, "when you define the working groups you are defining the agenda."²⁹

When this round of consultations with the foreign ministers was over, Vance announced that a December convening of Geneva was still targetted. The US had indicated to the Arab parties that it would support a modification of the "working paper" to the extent of leaving unclear the composition and

authority of the working committees. The US also apparently instructed the Arab parties to select suitable Palestinian participants, making sure they were residents of the occupied territories and not with the PLO. The US itself initiated contact with prominent West Bank Palestinians such as Hebron mayor Fahd al Qawasimi.³⁰ According to Chairman Yasser Arafat, the PLO "had accepted the formula of non-prominent members of the PLO" but insisted that they be nominated by the PLO Executive Committee.³¹

THE JERUSALEM DECISION

There is remarkably little information available concerning developments in the weeks just prior to Sadat's Jerusalem visit. A number of the elements behind the visit can be listed, although the exact sequence is unclear. Early in the fall Carter used a special envoy to transmit a hand-written, wax-sealed message to Sadat appealing for a "bold" and "daring" gesture that could cut through the procedural wrangling and precipitate substantive negotiations in the Geneva framework. The idea of a meeting with Sadat had been proposed by Begin during his first trip to the White House in July, and was relayed to Sadat via Nahum Goldmann, former president of the World Jewish Congress, and Morocco's King Hassan. Dayan visited Hassan during his mysterious disappearance from Europe on his way to the UN meetings in September. Ismail Fahmy, the Egyptian Foreign Minister who resigned in protest over the trip, claims that Sadat favored the idea but that he, Fahmy, had objected strongly enough to "put the lid on it."³² Begin asserted that

I was working on this meeting with President Sadat since I entered the prime minister's office—we discussed it with Rumania's President Ceasescu, we discussed it with the secretary of state, Mr. Vance, and with the President of the US . . . It did not come as a surprise . . . the element of surprise was in his decision to meet with me in Jerusalem.³³

President Carter, when asked by James Reston if he knew in advance about the Sadat initiative, replied:

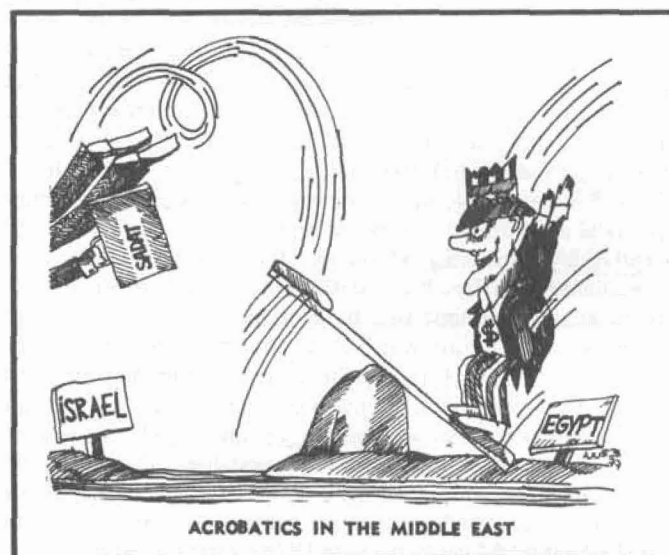
That is a hard question to answer. Sadat and I exchange communications frequently and he had made a proposal to me a week or so before that date that was precursors of this one (*sic*). But I have to say that Sadat's actually going to Jerusalem at that time as a sole Arab leader was not anticipated.³⁴

Sadat now blames the Syrians (and their Soviet mentors) for halting progress to Geneva with their rejection of the Israeli-American "working paper."³⁵ It seems equally likely that his impetus for the trip was prompted when the United States withdrew its earlier assurances that Israel would consider changes in the text of the "working paper."³⁶ Following his earlier pattern of a grand *coup de theatre*, his first thought was to invite the "Big Five" to come together for a day in the Middle East to set out principles and guidelines for peace talks.

I kept thinking all the way from Rumania to Iran . . . all of them are my friends. Callaghan was talking to me only yesterday. D'Estaing is a great personal friend. Despite the tense relations existing between us today, I have always said that friendship binds me to Brezhnev . . . We and Hua Kuo-Feng are friends . . .

The fifth is President Carter with whom I am bound by friendship.³⁷

Carter's quick veto of this improbable idea may be the reason Sadat did not seek prior approval for the Jerusalem idea. But the way in which the Jerusalem trip was advanced suggests that Sadat himself felt uncertain about its reception—in Washington, Jerusalem, and, not least, in Egypt. In his rambling speech opening the current session of the Egyptian Assembly, he complained of Israeli efforts to exasperate the Arab side with the drawn-out negotiations over procedure. Sadat felt at least as constrained as Carter by the December deadline for resumption of Geneva talks. "Procedural questions do not interest me at all," he declared. "I am going to Geneva." The specific offer to go "even to the Knesset" has some appearance of a casual insertion. Carter did not pick up on the Jerusalem remark in his press conference the next day: against a backdrop of savage Israeli air bombardment of Lebanese and Palestinian civilians in southern Lebanon, Carter urged the other Arab states to "stop quibbling" and proceed, with Sadat, to Geneva. Only several days later, in an interview for CBS television news, did the Jerusalem remark emerge as a serious prospect.



The effect, and the likely intent, of Sadat's offer was to undercut the formulation of a joint Arab stand at the Arab foreign ministers' meeting in Tunis scheduled to open on November 12.* This November session, the last opportunity for Sadat to demonstrate the validity of his "American strategy," was expected to produce a joint Arab proposal on Geneva in response to the Israeli-American "working paper." According to sources as diverse as Fahmy and King Hussein, this had been all but finalized through the mediation of Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al Faisal. In choosing to scuttle the long-standing policy of Arab coordination, Sadat displayed a readiness to make concessions on the so-called procedural issues unacceptable to the other Arab parties. Similarly, he probably perceived that Geneva would be a drawn-out and possibly futile undertaking if Egypt were restricted from offering generous terms to the Israelis by the demands of solidarity with negoti-

*An Arabic newspaper published in London noted the extraordinary security measures at the Tunis conference. In addition to 1,000 Tunisian special forces, Egyptian Foreign Minister Fahmy brought an entourage of 20 Egyptian commandos, Syria's Khaddam had 15 Syrian guards, and Prince Saud al Faisal was protected by three American security guards whose ID cards had Arabic names. (*Al Manar*, Nov. 19, 1977).

ating partners like Syria, backed by the Soviet Union.[†]

Sadat saw a long, arduous road ahead, and one whose promise of success diminished with each passing week and month. The contradictions that beset Egypt could not await the distant and uncertain conclusion of the snail-paced negotiations then underway. Egypt's lack of a credible military option stood out against Israel's ferocious attacks in southern Lebanon and the rash of articles in the Western media on Israeli plans for a "war of annihilation" in the event of future hostilities. Sadat's urgency must have been hastened too by the lack of any improvement in Egypt's economic condition. US Treasury Secretary Blumenthal, on a tour of the Middle East in October, told the Israelis that the Egyptian economic situation would force Egypt into a settlement within three years.³⁸ Sadat had committed his regime to cutting the budget deficit by reducing subsidies and undertaking other reforms dictated by the IMF and other lenders. This had to be offset politically by success in the negotiations over Sinai.

The sum of evidence certainly suggests that the US was quite aware of Sadat's predicament and encouraged him to move unilaterally to launch the Geneva talks. A meeting between Sadat and Begin looked like the most promising move, and one that would leave the other parties little choice but to follow along. The evidence likewise indicates that Sadat's decision to go to Jerusalem was all his own. His flair for theatrics and his appetite for media attention was activated by his frustration with what he perceived to be Carter's inability to withstand pressures from Israel and its allies in the United States. By going to Jerusalem and implicitly according political recognition to Israel as a state and to Jerusalem as its capital, by conceding willingness to construct a "peace" in accordance with Israeli stipulations including normalization of political and economic ties, by avoiding mention of the PLO, by pledging "no more war," Sadat thought he was making the Israelis, and their American backers, an offer they couldn't refuse. He moved with the naive conviction that this package would be spectacular enough to generate Israeli concessions and American pressures for those concessions. This conviction remained unimpaired until the Ismailia meeting with Begin on Christmas day, when it finally became clear that 1977's Man of the Year might easily become 1978's First Casualty.

IMPACT OF THE TRIP

For Sadat all the world is indeed a stage. The Jerusalem show played to packed houses around the globe, but the target audiences were in the United States, Israel, and Egypt. The strategic intent of his unilateral concessions, to generate US pressure on Israel, was fully in keeping with the simplistic—and remarkably unproductive—strategy Sadat has followed since coming to power. Sadat fancies himself a deep strategic thinker, a vanity that Kissinger learned to nourish, but his real talent is an ability to camouflage desperation as boldness. His only strength is his utter and incontrovertible weakness. He has posed something of an ultimatum to Washington and Jerusalem: either respond generously with concessions that will permit the regime to survive in Egypt and gain influence in the Middle East, or risk continued hostility, inevitable instability and eventual collapse.

There is a second part to Sadat's syllogism: in response to an end to the state of war, the multinational investors and international financiers will produce the cash and productive resources to resolve the country's desperate economic problems. Even if such loans and investments do come forth—an uncertain proposition at best—there is no reason to expect that greater integration into the world capitalist market will dramatically improve the living and working conditions of the Egyptian masses, as a look at any of capitalism's other "success stories" will confirm. Sadat has waged a relentless media campaign to convince the Egyptian people that a peace settlement is the key to economic prosperity. Increasingly hard-pressed, and wary of another war, Egyptians are willing to accept for the moment the regime's effort to shift blame for the economic disaster from itself to the Palestinians and their struggle.

But as war-weary and hungry as they are, masses of Egyptians have not forgotten the corruption and oppressive economic policies of the Sadat regime that brought them to the streets in January 1977. The Jerusalem venture has gained Sadat a measure of popularity, but this must be balanced against the fact that any Egyptian protest has been stifled. An effort to hold a seminar at Cairo University was broken up by authorities and the organizers arrested. Scores of Palestinians, not all of them political activists, have been deported. As the manifesto of poet and activist Ahmed Fuad Negm shows, Egypt's prisons are brimming with opponents to Sadat's regime.* Without quick and positive results popular sentiment will revert even more violently to the anti-regime mood that made the "sacred mission" necessary.

The United States' response to Sadat's trip and his subsequent call to the Cairo meetings was surprise and wariness. "We were expecting him to do something big," said one White House official, "but not that big."³⁹ Carter and his strategists were naturally resistant to being put in a position of pressuring Israel. More seriously, they feared that the effort to engage Syria and the Soviet Union in a settlement would be wrecked. This fear was shared by the Saudis as well, and accounts for that country's careful and qualified support of Sadat. Brzezinski's subsequent enunciation of his "concentric circles" paradigm* was simply an effort to situate the separate Egypt-Israel talks in a "comprehensive" framework.

Brzezinski's verbal gloss indicated the Administration was ready to take advantage of the revised agenda to push for a separate Egyptian-Israeli settlement with the necessary cover of "comprehensive principles" including full withdrawal and Palestinian self-determination. The United States has responded to Sadat's initiative not with pressure on Israel but on Sadat's Arab critics. It has taken immediate advantage of the breach in the Arab world to push the PLO out of the picture, rejuvenate

*The standard image of cheering Cairenes must be assessed in light of the motives and emotions that brought crowds of Egyptians into the streets. In a city of well over 8 million, many of whom are under- or unemployed, the mobilization of crowds has never been a difficult undertaking. Many workers and peasants from outlying districts were offered a day off, transportation, and often a small payment for their participation. As a result, Cairo in recent years has witnessed many impressive receptions. Nixon, King Hussein—even King Juan Carlos of Spain—drew massive crowds, but more out of curiosity or necessity than sincere feelings of support.

*The "first circle" involved direct negotiations between Israel and Egypt mediated by the US. The "second circle" was defined as the "moderate" Arabs, chiefly Jordan and non-PLO West Bankers who could serve as Palestinian representatives. The "third circle" was conceived to include Syria and the Soviet Union, the recalcitrant parties who would finally be engaged in the ratification process, "and that clearly is Geneva." (NY Times, Dec. 12, 1977)

[†] This seems to be the analysis of Henry Kissinger, who has remained in close touch with Sadat since leaving office and spoke with both Sadat and Begin before and during the Jerusalem visit. See James Reston's column in the NY Times, November 20, 1977.



King Hussein as the representative of Palestinians of the occupied territories, and leaving the door open for Syria to join the party once it realizes that is where its interests can be best served.

The brunt of Sadat's move has fallen on the Palestinians and the PLO. The PLO's innate distrust of Sadat and opposition to his trip was initially tempered by an unwillingness to sever relations with Sadat and be even more vulnerable to Syrian pressure in Lebanon. Sadat tried to take advantage of this vulnerability and to force rather than encourage the PLO leadership to support him openly. Within days of his return from Jerusalem, and well before the "rejection states" came together in Tripoli, Sadat expelled the resident PLO representatives and closed down the Voice of Palestine broadcasting facilities.⁴⁰ His failure to mention the PLO in his Knesset speech was followed by an invitation to Israeli-approved Palestinians to meet with him in Cairo.⁴¹ When invitations were issued to the preparatory talks in Cairo, no representatives of the PLO were summoned to the Foreign Ministry. Top-level PLO officials told Eric Rouleau that the invitation to the PLO was not to participate in the Cairo talks but to discuss, along with the Israeli-approved West Bankers, how the Palestinians might be represented. Arafat, said one of his top aides, "understood the meaning of the maneuver; [Sadat] is attempting to set up a Palestinian delegation which would suit Israel, that is, exclude the PLO—a formula which we will oppose with all our strength."⁴² Abu Iyad, a top PLO official, told a Tunis newspaper

If a chair were put at the PLO's disposal, someone could be appointed to occupy it, but no chair has been reserved for the PLO at the Cairo conference . . . An invitation was extended . . . not to participate in the conference, but to sit a long way from it with a view to observing the proceedings.⁴³

The Palestinians on the West Bank have maintained a steadfast refusal to deal with Sadat. Only well-known collaborators with Israel and Jordan like the Ja'baris and Abd al Rauf al Faris have declared their support for Sadat; most of the mayors on the West Bank refused to meet with Sadat when he was in Jerusalem. Commenting on the delegations going to Cairo from the West Bank and Gaza, Ramallah Mayor Karim Khalaf exclaimed that they "don't even represent their wives. They're being paid ten dinars each to take a tourist trip, to visit the pyramids."⁴⁴ Demonstrations and meetings in solidarity with the PLO have been frequent ever since the Sadat announcement.

Sadat's visit has exposed the intractable character and centrality of the Palestinian question to the state of war or peace in the region. Yet, the PLO's present vulnerable position is only partly the result of the coordinated assault by Egypt, Israel and the US. It also reflects the absence in the Arab world of militant unity in the struggle for Palestinian rights, either on the level of regimes or of popular movements. An explication of the impact of the Sadat trip on the various Arab states and a detailed assessment of their relationship to the Palestinian movement is beyond the scope of this

article. Here we can merely outline some of the most important features of the Arab political map in the wake of the visit.

Sadat received the open endorsement of only a few reactionary rulers: Hassan of Morocco; Qabus of Oman; Nimery of Sudan. Public condemnation, while more widespread, is similarly limited to the states that met in Tripoli as the "rejection front" or "front of steadfastness": Syria, Iraq, Libya, Algeria and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Of these only Syria is a confrontation state, already committed in large degree to a negotiated settlement. The Syrian leaders were furious at Sadat's willingness to cave in to Israel on the question of Palestinian representation and to grant Israel recognition merely to initiate negotiations. This leaves Assad little to bargain with for the Golan except his hold on the PLO and underscores the limited choices available to the Palestinians in this period. Iraq's fierce enmity to Syria is not reducible to its opposition to any negotiated settlement over Palestine. The refusal of Syria and the other parties to adopt Iraqi rhetoric on this point led to an Iraqi walkout from Tripoli. Libya and Algeria are providing material as well as political support to Syria and the Palestinians following the Tripoli meeting, and Algeria's Boumedienne has put considerable effort since then into forging some effective degree of unity in the "rejection" camp. Up to this point, though, the opposition to Sadat has not overcome internal differences and has not devised any effective challenge to his initiative.

Of the remaining states, only the positions of Saudi Arabia and Jordan are of consequence. Both have declined to endorse Sadat, for differing tactical reasons. The Saudis were upset and surprised by Sadat's venture, and regard it as a serious tactical error.* They nonetheless see little alternative but to support him while maintaining a public neutrality that allows continued communication with Syria and Algeria. King Hussein wants to keep good relations with both Syria and Egypt, and is ready to move into the negotiations as a potential custodian of the West Bank once Egypt and the US secure an acceptable Israeli withdrawal offer. Jordan, created half a century ago by Britain as a mercenary state to pacify the Palestinian Arabs uprooted by Zionism, represents an essential part of the American strategy for the ultimate disposition of the West Bank. Carter's main complaint with Begin's insulting self-rule offer at Ismailia was that it did not provide a big enough role for Jordan. Hussein is already functioning informally as part of the negotiations, "running interference" for Sadat and Carter with the other Arab states.⁴⁵ The small Gulf states like Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates have

refrained from openly supporting Sadat for fear of alienating other Arab states or the Palestinian communities living there.

Sadat's shock tactics have shattered Arab politics, but his stated target, Israel, has emerged relatively unshaken. In Israel, initial disappointment with Begin's Knesset response faded even quicker than the euphoria that accompanied the trip itself. Begin and his advisors have stood fast against concessions and let Sadat make all the moves.* When the Israelis made no offers in Jerusalem, Sadat invited them to Cairo. When they sent a low-level team with no authority to discuss substantive issues, he invited Begin to Ismailia. At the Mena House meetings Egypt acceded to Israeli demands for no recognition of the Palestinians through name-plates or flags, and agreed to exclude from the Cairo agenda the principle of total withdrawal in favor of a more vague enshrinement of UN Resolution 242.⁴⁶ The Israelis claim that only the intervention of his foreign minister prevented Sadat from signing a joint statement at Ismailia.

Internally Begin's only significant criticism has come from the right, not only from predictable quarters like the ultra-nationalist Gush Emunim, but even the Labor Party, whose leader Shimon Peres castigated Begin for offering Egypt too much in Ismailia. Begin's peace plan with its concept of "self-rule" is nothing but a reworked version of various Labor Party formulations since 1967. Zionist colonization would continue unimpeded, and Israel would maintain internal security functions, including a veto over repatriation of Palestinian refugees. The most recent prior version of this plan was laid out in September by Dayan, who called it a "functional compromise." It was immediately blasted in the Labor Party newspaper as "functional colonialism"⁴⁷—but there has been no such response this time.*

Settlement activity continues unabated on the West Bank: while Begin was in Washington presenting his "plan" to Carter, the Knesset Finance Committee approved a transfer of IL 89 million to the Ministry of Agriculture "for rural settlements beyond the green line," including a commitment of IL 18 million for the first quarter of 1978.⁴⁸ On January 10 the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee approved a government plan to establish four new settlements in "Samaria" on Arab-owned land seized by the army "for military purposes."⁴⁹ With regard to the Sinai settlements, the following dispatch from the *Jerusalem Post* clarifies the cabinet decision to forego new settlements there in favor of "strengthening" existing ones:

Yamit—At least nine Jewish National Fund bulldozers were working yesterday at Moshav Haruvit, 10 kms. east of Al Arish . . . apparently part of a plan mapped out by the World Zionist Organization to stake an

*Sadat's decision to visit Jerusalem apparently provoked a serious if temporary split in Saudi ruling circles. According to Hoagland (*Washington Post*, Jan. 22, 1978), Foreign Minister Saud al Faisal and Defense Minister Prince Sultan were angry at being put on the spot; King Khalid and Prince Abdullah immediately rallied to Sadat's defense; Crown Prince Fahd hesitated at first but finally opted to support Sadat at the strong urging of the United States. In late October Saud al Faisal told David Hirst (*Manchester Guardian*, Oct. 28, 1977) that he was not "one of those who believe that all the elements of a settlement are in American hands." His implicit criticism of Sadat went further when he declared that "the representation of the Palestinians is not a procedural matter but a fundamental one." According to a *New York Times* article (Dec. 3, 1977) from Beirut, Saud al Faisal feared that Sadat's move would unite the Palestinian movement around the "rejectionist" position, negating his extensive efforts throughout the year on Sadat's behalf to persuade the PLO leadership to accept Resolution 242 and join the Geneva talks.

Hoagland writes that Kamal Adham, the head of Saudi intelligence and Sadat's original link to the royal family, had met with Dayan in Rabat in September, representing Sadat. Adham and Sadat decided not to inform the Saudi leaders of the planned Sadat-Begin meeting. Since then, "Adham has been relieved of his intelligence and Egyptian liaison duties."

*Finance Minister Simcha Ehrlich, in a Jerusalem TV interview, was asked if he favored concession in the West Bank. "What does that mean?" he responded. "In favor of concessions in Judea and Samaria? I first of all regret that we do not have the east bank also so that we could have something to give up." (*FBIS*, Dec. 1, 1977)

*To those critics who feared that allowing West Bank Arabs, who choose Israeli citizenship under the Begin proposal, to buy land inside Israel might lead to substantial purchases financed by the Arab oil producers, Dayan responded that since 92% of the land was owned by the state or the Jewish National Fund, this represented nothing more than a paper gesture. Dayan promised that any effort by West Bank residents to hamper the expansion of Israeli settlements would be met by force: "How will I prevent their refusal to sell land to Jews? How will I prevent the influx of hundreds of thousands of refugees from Lebanon against our will? By force of the army: the IDF." In Ismailia Begin read the long and detailed proposal to the Egyptians. When Sadat asked for a copy, he was told that only one draft copy existed and that a copy would be sent later from Jerusalem. (*NYT*, Dec. 30)

Israeli claim as quickly as possible to a continuous strip of coastal land stretching from Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip to Al Arish.

The work that was begun last week at Haruvit, as well as the work which is continuing at Moshav Nezer Hazani in the Gaza Strip, was being interpreted here yesterday by observers as easily fitting into the cabinet's definition of "strengthening the existing villages in the Rafah area by extending the land available for agriculture and increasing the civilian urban and rural population."

For example, the bulldozers working yesterday on the preparation of three sites in the immediate vicinity of the settlements . . . could have been working on three new settlements planned as Haruvit Aleph, Bet and Gimmel. It was noted, however, that the same three sites can also be seen as "strengthening" Moshav Haruvit, which could eventually become a very large moshav of over 200 families.⁵⁰

OUTFLANKING THE FUTURE

The Christmas Day summit of Begin and Sadat at Ismailia provided the irrefutable public evidence that Sadat's Jerusalem venture had failed. At the very most, negotiations would continue only at a very slow pace, crippling Sadat's hope for a quick conclusion that would vindicate his gamble and produce the prosperity which he promised would follow. Israeli contempt for the Egyptians and their determination to see how far they could push Sadat were manifest in their proposal, which contained not a single new offer.* It was as if Begin had taken Sadat's outstretched hand, only to wipe his nose on the sleeve. When it was over, Dayan told reporters that Egypt would have to make "painful concessions" to reach an accord.⁵¹

The completely inadequate Israeli response to Sadat points to more than a failure for Sadat's "bold gesture." It revealed serious flaws in the essence of his strategy: that the US is willing to exert leverage on Israel to meet minimal Egyptian demands. The Egyptians had been co-ordinating and reviewing their tactics on a day-to-day basis with the Americans in Cairo,⁵² as well as maintaining close touch with Carter, Vance, Brzezinski—even Henry Kissinger—in Washington. Just prior to the Ismailia meeting Egyptian officials claimed to have received assurances from the Carter administration that Begin's presentation would be "substantially more forthcoming" than the one presented in Washington.⁵³ As it turns out, Carter merely pressed Begin to "repackage" his proposal in the direction of marking out a clear role for Jordan in a West Bank settlement,⁵⁴ but even this Begin declined to do. One Egyptian official later commented that "We half expected the Israelis to take everything we had to offer and put it in their pocket and ask blandly for more, but we didn't expect the Americans to take the same attitude."⁵⁵

Sadat's latest move, recalling his delegates from the Jerusalem talks, represents yet another desperate effort to secure that US leverage which has always been at the core of his strategy. Just before leaving for Jerusalem, Foreign Minister Kamel asked, "If the US doesn't move now, then when?" His chief aide, Butros Ghali, sounded the same theme upon his return from Jerusalem: "Are the Americans in a position to give something more? Have they the will? Have they the capacity?"⁵⁶

*In Ismailia Begin read the long and detailed proposal to the Egyptians. When Sadat asked for a copy he was told that only one draft copy existed and that a copy would be sent later from Jerusalem. (NYT Dec. 30).



The American will and capacity was quite evident in the days leading up to the Jerusalem talks, and the pressure has been more on Egypt than Israel. The tiff between Carter and Sadat over Palestinian self-determination was settled when Carter read an already prepared text at Aswan asserting that the Palestinians should be enabled "to participate in the determination of their own future." This formula, strictly speaking, is quite the opposite of *self-determination*. Sadat proclaimed that his and Carter's views were "identical."⁵⁷ The US wanted the Jerusalem talks to produce the "fig-leaf" for a separate Israeli-Egyptian settlement in the form of a set of principles that would postpone settlement of the Palestinian/West Bank questions by accepting the broad outlines of Begin's plan as a five-year "interim solution" during which the Israeli military government would be phased out and Israelis, Jordanians and "moderate Palestinians" would negotiate the ultimate future of the occupied territories and people.⁵⁸ No outcome, including a future Palestinian state, would be formally ruled out now. Rather, shared Israeli, Jordanian and US aversion to such a solution would effectively preclude that possibility. Once the Jordanians and selected Palestinians agreed to participate in such protracted negotiations, Sadat would be free to settle over Sinai.

Sadat's pull-out from Jerusalem appears to be a clumsy and ill-timed ploy to secure what could only be gained from a united Arab stand. Sadat eliminated that possibility with his Jerusalem trip and subsequent moves like breaking off relations with the states that met in Tripoli. Whatever Sadat's intent, therefore, it objectively represents nothing more than a diversionary gesture from the impending separate settlement. On the anniversary of the January 1977 uprising, Sadat is no less

*A PLO spokesman, Mahmoud Labadi, retorted: "Let Mr. Carter tell us where he wants these rights realized—on the moon or on earth . . . As far as the PLO is concerned, it knows what it wants. We want a sovereign, independent Palestinian state. We shall never give up this right or compromise." (NYT, Jan. 5, 1978)

desperate, no less frantic, than when he undertook his "sacred mission" to Jerusalem. The American pressures now will be on Sadat—to re-open negotiations. The question that Eric Rouleau raised right after the Jerusalem visit is even more appropriate now: "What will he do next to try to outflank the future?"⁵⁹

The future and its history cannot be separated. One thing emerges clearly from Sadat's effort to precipitate a solution to this enduring struggle: the question of Palestine, its land and its people, is intractably central. Sadat's own attempts to skirt the question, and Begin's refusal to admit its existence, expose the fragility and impermanence of any deals that result from the current moves. If it is true that Egypt and Israel are trying to beat their swords into plowshares on the Palestinian anvil, it is useful to recall Orwell's observation that it is always the anvil which breaks the hammer, and never the other way around.

¹New York Times, March 22, 1971. Hereafter cited as NYT.

²Edward R.F. Sheehan, *The Arabs, Israelis and Kissinger* (New York, 1976), p. 23.

³Ha'aretz, Dec. 3, 1974. Reprinted in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, Dec. 4, 1974. Hereafter cited as FBIS.

⁴Emphasis in distributed text of Kissinger's speech, *Washington Post*, June 24, 1975. Hereafter cited as WP.

⁵Davar, July 4, 1975.

⁶Interview with NBC, Nov. 27, 1977; FBIS, Nov. 29, 1977.

⁷NYT, Nov. 20, 1977.

⁸Robert J. Pranger and Dale R. Tahtinen, *Implications of the 1976 Arab-Israeli Military Status* (Washington, 1976), p. 12.

⁹Survival (London, Nov.-Dec., 1975), p. 282.

¹⁰Marie-Christine Aulas, "Sadat's Egypt," *New Left Review* 98 (July-August, 1976), p. 84.

¹¹NYT, Jan. 13, 1977.

¹²NYT, Jan. 26, 1977.

¹³NYT, Feb. 11, 1977.

¹⁴NYT, Feb. 11, 1977.

¹⁵NYT, May 10, 1977.

¹⁶NYT, May 25, 1977.

¹⁷For details see *MERIP Reports* No. 60.

¹⁸WP, Aug. 11, 1977.

¹⁹NYT, Aug 19, 1977.

²⁰WP, Sept. 5, 1977.

²¹WP, Sept. 16, 1977.

²²NYT, Sept. 19, 1977.

²³NYT, Sept. 30, 1977.

²⁴NYT, Oct. 1, 1977.

²⁵NYT, Oct. 3, 1977.

²⁶NYT, Oct. 3, 1977.

²⁷WP, Oct. 3, 1977.

²⁸NYT, Oct. 4, 1977.

²⁹WP, Oct. 8, 1977.

³⁰Davar, Oct. 27, 1977; FBIS, Oct. 28, 1977.

³¹Manchester Guardian, Jan. 3, 1978.

³²Events (London), Dec. 30, 1977.

³³FBIS, Dec. 20, 1977.

³⁴NYT, Dec. 5, 1977.

³⁵E.g., *Time*, Dec. 28, 1977.

³⁶WP, Dec. 2, 1977.

³⁷This selection from the running thoughts of Anwar Sadat is from his birthday interview on Cairo radio and TV, FBIS, Dec. 27, 1977.

³⁸WP, Oct. 26, 1977.

³⁹Stanley Karnow, "Carter's Long Mideast Ordeal," *New York Times Magazine* (Jan. 15, 1978), p. 46.

⁴⁰NYT, Nov. 24, 1977.

⁴¹NYT, Nov. 25, 1977.

⁴²Le Monde, Dec. 1-2, 1977.

⁴³L'Action, Dec. 17, 1977; in FBIS, Dec. 23, 1977.

⁴⁴Jerusalem Post, Dec. 19, 1977.

⁴⁵NYT, Jan. 3, 1978.

⁴⁶Jerusalem Post, Dec. 20, 1977.

⁴⁷Davar, Sept. 21, 1977.

⁴⁸Al Hamishmar, Dec. 21, 1977; in FBIS, Dec. 22, 1977.

⁴⁹Jewish Telegraphic Agency Bulletin, Jan. 11, 1978.

⁵⁰Jerusalem Post, Jan. 10, 1978.

⁵¹NYT, Dec. 27, 1977.

⁵²Ha'aretz, Dec. 14, 1977.

⁵³NYT, Dec. 23, 1977.

⁵⁴NYT, Dec. 21, 24, 25, 1977.

⁵⁵NYT, Dec. 31, 1977.

⁵⁶WP, Jan. 20, 1977.

⁵⁷NYT, Jan. 5, 1978.

⁵⁸NYT, Jan. 14, 1978.

⁵⁹Le Monde, Nov. 22, 1977.

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“PRE-EMPTIVE PEACE”

ARMS TRANSFERS AND THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

by Mike Klare and Dan Volman

In the four years following the 1973 October war, Israeli arms purchases have transformed the military situation in the Middle East. Whereas in 1973 Israel was largely outgunned by the “front-line” Arab forces (Egypt, Jordan and Syria), it now enjoys an enormous advantage in deployable combat equipment. As a result of its multi-billion dollar arms modernization program, “Israel is so far ahead of any alliance of Arab powers in weapons and trained manpower that outside pressures would have only a peripheral effect on its strategic decisions” in the event of a new confrontation.¹

With massive US support, Israel has stockpiled enough arms, ammunition, and fuel to fight a three-front conventional war for 30 days: enough time, in the view of most analysts, to overcome any combination of Arab forces.² If Israel’s plan for future arms deliveries (the so-called “Matmon-C” package*) is honored by the US, as it probably will be, there is little doubt that Israel will retain its superior position for the foreseeable future. Indeed, high-ranking Israeli officials have reportedly told visiting Americans that “Israeli strategy in any new war

will be to destroy the two main Arab armies (Egypt’s and Syria’s) so quickly and completely that the Arabs will not present a military threat to Israel for 10 years.”³ Surely the knowledge of Israeli military superiority played a key role in President Sadat’s decision to offer radical concessions to Israel in order to launch peace talks.

Israel’s enormous advantage is the product of a concerted effort to correct any military weaknesses exposed by the October War, and to prevent a situation that would allow an outside power—namely the United States—to dictate the terms of a future cease-fire by threatening to withhold vital military supplies. This effort has been abetted by the powerful Israeli lobby in the United States, which assures almost automatic Congressional support for any Israeli arms request. The Arabs, on the other hand, have been weakened by internal strife (particularly the war in Lebanon), political differences, and, in the case of Egypt, a switch in arms suppliers that has rendered unuseable a large portion of its current weapons inventory. Although changing political conditions in the Arab countries

*Matmon-C was reportedly presented to US defense officials on October 7, 1977 by S. “Seeko” Sussman, the Director-General of Israel’s Defense Ministry. According to *Armed Forces Journal*, Matmon-C, if accepted, will result in annual arms deliveries of about \$1.5 billion per year—in 1977 or 1978 dollars (which means the figure could rise much higher to account for inflation). Key goals of the Israeli package include: a 100 percent increase in Israeli tank forces, a 50 percent increase in jet fighters, and a 900 percent increase in anti-tank guided missiles. Matmon-C also differs from earlier Israeli proposals in that it includes provision for the delivery of very advanced

arms technology, permitting Israel to self-produce such items as the upgraded Hughes *Maverick* air-to-ground missile, the advanced version of the AIM-9L air-to-air missile, ultra-sophisticated micro-electronics and surveillance systems, and the “Chobram” armor developed by Britain and transferred to the US for use on the new XM-1 main battle tank. Although it is possible that Washington will refuse some of these requests on the grounds that recent progress on the diplomatic front reduces Israel’s need for US arms, it is likely that much of Matmon-C will be approved by US officials. (*—Armed Forces Journal*, Dec. 1977, p. 14; *The New York Times*, Dec. 19, 1977, p. 1.)

could alter this picture, it is unlikely that any foreseeable developments will erase Israel's present military advantage.⁴

Despite the official US policy of maintaining a more "even-handed" policy in its relations with the two sides, US arms deliveries to Israel are almost wholly responsible for the dramatic shift in military capabilities. While Israel has succeeded in developing a significant arms industry, it still relies on US supplies for advanced combat equipment and sophisticated electronic gear. Israel is particularly dependent on the United States for the electronic warfare gear and precision-guided munitions (PGMs) it will need to neutralize Arab defensive forces in any future conflict. As indicated by the accompanying tables, Israeli imports from the United States include a large number of advanced, air-to-air and air-to-surface missiles, including the TV-guided *Maverick*, radar-homing *Shrike*, and infrared-sensing *Sidewinder*. While these weapons would naturally be used to fend off any future Arab assault, they would be particularly useful in mounting a pre-emptive strike against entrenched Arab forces.*

Officially, the United States seeks only to provide Israel with sufficient forces to withstand an Arab attack and not to conduct major offensive operations. However, with the aid of friends in Congress and the Departments of State and Defense, Israel has been able to acquire sufficient weaponry to either: 1) launch a devastating pre-emptive attack against its principle adversaries and still overcome any counterattack; or 2) withstand any conceivable Arab attack and then turn around and destroy the aggressors' remaining force *in toto*.⁵ This achievement is largely due to Israel's success in convincing key US leaders that its "legitimate defense requirements" should be based on *ostensible* Arab capabilities—those indicated by "paper" counts of total manpower, weaponry, etc.—rather than on a realistic calculation of *deployable* Arab power.

While total Arab strength looks impressive on paper, any objective assessment would have to take into account factors besides paper inventories. Of the front-line states, one-third of Syria's army is committed to "peacekeeping" operations in Lebanon, most of Egypt's vast array of Soviet weaponry is inoperable due to lack of spare parts and proper servicing, and neither Jordan nor Iraq is likely to commit more than token forces in any future conflict. Libya, humiliated in the recent border war with Egypt and involved in military operations in northern Chad, can not be expected to transfer much of its enormous stockpile of arms to any front-line state in the event of war. Former Pentagon analyst Anthony H. Cordesman wrote about the military balance that:

There are two counts of Arab forces. The first, which represents the count used by most US experts . . . assumes that Jordan will deploy only token forces [and that] much of the Egyptian and Syrian forces shown are inoperable due to [inadequate] service or maintenance, unfit for combat because of training

and readiness, or tied down for internal security reasons . . .

Israel, however, uses a very different balance in arguing for aid than the US, although its assessment for war planning purposes is probably identical to that of the United States. Israel counts all major Arab forces in asking for aid, and not the major military threat. The result is a definition of military requirements for "defense" which also gives Israel the capability to launch lightning offensives against Egypt, Syria, Jordan, or Lebanon before the great powers could intervene . . . These requirements are so high that they would leave Israel relatively immune to US threats not to resupply it as the US did after the October War.⁶

If Cordesman is correct—and the data strongly support his conclusions—the question remains as to why US officials have acceded to Israel's inflated projections rather than to a more objective calculation of its security needs. While no categorical and completely satisfactory answer is available, the following considerations strike us as most relevant. First, on a strategic level, Israel can be counted on as a military ally to defend US Middle East interests in any conflict with the Soviet Union.* Thus, Israel is a factor in the global and regional military balance between the superpowers. While the Arab states have shown some readiness to alter their military dependence between the rival powers, Israel has no realistic alternative to the United States. Second, the US strategy of co-opting the front-line Arab states in no way lessens its interest in having Israel maintain a formidable military superiority in the region. US perception of many Arab regimes as inherently unstable suggests the need for a powerful Israel capable of providing help in the event of a need for US intervention. By the same token, one can presume the interest of US strategists in avoiding any need to resupply Israel with weapons and munitions during future active hostilities. The US resupply effort during the 1973 war specifically triggered Saudi Arabia's decision to invoke the "oil weapon." Lastly, of course, Israel's strong support in Congress has consistently led to higher levels of aid than even those proposed by the administration in power.

COUNTRY	FIGHTER/ STRIKERS	HELICOPT.	TANKS	ARMORED VEHICLES
Israel				
1974	355	77	1900	6100
1974-78	141	40+	1525	?
Total	496	117+	3425	6100+
Egypt				
1974	638	230	2000	2100
1974-78	120	74	500	0
Total	758	304	2500	2100
Syria				
1974	290+	60	1650	1400
1974-78	200	15+	820	110
Total	490+	75+	2470	1510
Jordan				
1974	50	9	240	670
1974-78	30	4	200	700
Total	80	13	440	1370

*According to one reputable analysis of the October war, then-Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan argued against an Israeli pre-emptive strike on Egypt just prior to October 6, 1973, on the grounds that Israel was not then technically capable of an effective air strike against Egypt's dispersed and well-defended airfields. "Since the preventive approach to its own defense was much favored by Israel's defense forces before the October war and found wanting on the eve of that war, one might plausibly assume that after the conflict Israel would seek to rebuild its preemptive capacities . . ." (Robert Pranger and Dale Tahtinen, *Implications of the 1976 Arab-Israeli Military Status* [Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1976] p. 7. Pranger and Tahtinen cite the London Times Insight Team, *The Yom Kippur War* [New York: Doubleday, 1974] pp. 122-23 for Dayan's October 1973 evaluation.)

*A top-level secret report prepared by the Carter Administration entitled "Military Posture Review" concludes that in the event of a Middle East war Israel alone "might deter Soviet combat force intervention or prevent the completion of such deployment." (New York Times, Jan. 6, 1978)

Moving now to an analysis of the actual weapons traffic, it is worthwhile to examine the data from several different viewpoints in order to obtain a fuller understanding of the implications of recent arms deliveries to the Middle East.

Volume: The flow of arms to the Middle East has increased enormously since the 1973 war. Using data supplied by the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), we find that the total value of military transfers to the Middle East rose from \$4.6 billion during 1970-72, to \$10.6 billion in the succeeding three years, for an increase of 130 percent. Looking at Israel and the front-line Arab states alone, we find a comparable increase, from \$2.95 billion in 1970-72 to \$5.9 billion in 1973-75.⁷ These figures represent actual *deliveries*, whereas equipment on order, but not yet delivered, would swell these totals significantly. Israel, for instance, has ordered \$7 billion in new arms from the United States since 1973, but has received only about half of that.⁸ Egypt, meanwhile, has placed very large orders with producers in France and Britain, but has received only a small percentage of this equipment. Clearly, when all these munitions are actually delivered, the combat states will be able to wage warfare at much higher levels of violence than during the 1973 war. The accompanying tables indicate, for instance, that Israel and the Arab front-line states will receive close to 2,000 combat aircraft between 1974 and 1978, or twice the total inventory of these countries in 1973 and four times their total losses in the October War.⁹

Recipients: Although all nations of the Middle East are receiving substantial quantities of new armaments, there have been significant shifts in the *direction* of the arms flow within the region. Prior to the October war, Israel was receiving less than 30 percent of all weapons transferred to the conflict zone; since 1973 it has been receiving more than 53 percent of all such deliveries. Egypt, on the other hand, has dropped from 54 percent of total deliveries in 1970-72 to a mere 17 percent of the total in 1973-75.¹⁰ While the figures for Egypt are likely to rise once the British and French equipment now on order begins to arrive, it is unlikely that Israel will lose its status as the region's leading arms recipient.

Suppliers: As in the case of recipients, there has been a significant shift in the *origin* of the weapons flowing into the Middle East. Prior to 1973 the Soviet Union was the principal supplier to the conflict region; today it has dropped to second place while the United States has moved into first place and Britain and France have emerged as major suppliers. This shift is largely due to Egypt's decision to turn to Western producers. Given the current political environment in the region, it is unlikely that this pattern will change appreciably in the near future.

Sophistication: More important, perhaps, than the increase in the volume of arms is the enormous increase in the *sophistication* of the weapons being shipped to the Middle East. Many new technologies were employed during the 1973 war, such as precision-guided antitank missiles and portable surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), but since then a virtual revolution in military technology has rendered even those 1973-vintage arms obsolete. Of particular significance is the introduction of advanced electronic countermeasures (ECMs, or devices which disrupt the radars, communications, and homing devices of the enemy) and "standoff" weapons (precision-guided munitions that can be fired and aimed at a target without exposing

the attacker to enemy fire) which render useless many of the defensive weapons used in the October war. There has been a real discrepancy in the *distribution* of imported arms. Prior to 1973, Egypt was receiving a fair supply of advanced Soviet weapons and Israel was noticeably lacking in some technologies (particularly ECMs and anti-missile defense); today Egypt is virtually devoid of many new systems while Israel has acquired a vast array of new missiles, radars, surveillance systems and electronic warfare devices. For this reason alone, most experts believe Israel would be able to withstand any conceivable Arab attack, or, if it chose, launch a devastating pre-emptive assault against deployed Arab forces.¹¹

Technology Transfers: In addition to importing arms, both sides in the Arab-Israeli conflict have sought to enhance their military preparedness and their immunity to future arms boycotts by developing a significant arms-making capability of their own. However, since neither side has sufficient technical capabilities to produce modern arms by themselves, they have had to turn to the advanced industrial powers to obtain the necessary technical know-how. Here, too, Israel has an enormous lead. Under a 1971 "Memorandum of Understanding" with the United States, Israel has received considerable US support for its domestic arms program, and now produces 40 percent of its combat equipment in local factories. Israeli-made equipment now includes such items as supersonic fighter planes (the *Kfir*), air-to-air missiles (the *Shafir*), anti-ship missiles (the *Gabriel*), and a wide variety of rockets, artillery, and small arms.¹² US intelligence sources also report that Israel has successfully built up a stockpile of nuclear weapons.¹³ The Arabs, meanwhile, have established the Arab Military Industrialization Organization (AMIO) with Saudi Arabian capital to create a diversified arms industry. Current plans call for the production of major European combat equipment in Egypt, including the Hawker-Siddeley *Hawk* trainer/ground attack aircraft and Westland *Lynx* helicopters.¹⁴ As yet, however, little has materialized from all these plans and it is likely to be a long time before any Arab nation is even partially self-sufficient in major combat arms.

Self-Sufficiency/Dependency: During the October war, both sides discovered that they were unable to sustain a high level of combat activity without significant arms deliveries from friendly powers, and thus in the end were compelled to accept a cease-fire that satisfied neither's ultimate objectives. Since 1973, both sides have sought to reduce their dependency on outside suppliers in order to prevent such imposed solutions in future conflicts, with varying degrees of success. By switching from Soviet-bloc to Western suppliers, Egypt has reduced its dependency on Moscow and has increased the number of suppliers it can turn to for its future military needs. However, the switch has left most of Egypt's Soviet made equipment inoperable (due to lack of spare parts and effective maintenance) at a time when Western arms are just beginning to trickle in, thus leaving Egypt highly vulnerable to an Israeli pre-emptive strike. It remains to be seen, moreover, whether the switch to Western arms will actually reduce Egypt's dependency on external suppliers over the long-run. Israel, by contrast, has been more successful in reducing its vulnerability to external pressure—but not by switching partners. As we have seen, Israel has used inflated estimates of Arab military strength to induce the United States to provide a vast surplus of military equipment which will enable the Israelis to conduct a

30-day war without having to turn to the US for emergency shipments of critical arms. Israel's success in developing an indigenous arms industry clearly enhances its advantage in this regard.

In examining these conclusions, one must ultimately agree with Anthony Cordesman that "US aid will go far beyond the limit necessary to assure Israel's security," and that US arms "will create an Israel which has all of the capabilities necessary to wage offensive war." Israel, he suggests, "will have the arms to cover the Jordanian front and simultaneously attack Syria and Egypt. It will acquire the capability to conduct rapid war and defeat Arab armies before the great powers can intervene."¹⁵

¹Drew Middleton in *The New York Times*, November 7, 1977.

²*The Washington Post*, October 26, 1977.

³*Ibid.*

⁴For discussion, see: Anthony H. Cordesman, "How Much is Too Much?" *Armed Forces Journal* (October 1977), pp. 32-9.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁷US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1966-1975* (Washington: author, 1977), pp. 56-76.

⁸US Department of Defense, *Foreign Military Sales Facts* (Washington: author, 1976), and, US Department of Defense, *Security Assistance Program, F.Y. 1978* (Washington: author, 1977).

⁹For additional data and projections, see Cordesman, pp. 34-7.

¹⁰ACDA, *World Military Expenditures*.

¹¹Drew Middleton in *The New York Times*, November 7, 1977.

¹²For complete list, see: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook 1977* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1977), pp. 291-2.

¹³*The New York Times*, March 16, 1976.

¹⁴*SIPRI Yearbook 1977*, pp. 297-8.

¹⁵Cordesman, p. 37.

SUPPLIER/QTY.	TYPE	COMMENT/DELIV. DATE	SOURCE
TO EGYPT			
FRANCE			
20	Dassault Mirage F-1 fighters	paid by Kuwait	1
44	Dassault Mirage F-1 C/E fighters	\$261.6m. / 1970	5
14	Dassault Mirage 5 SDE strike/intercept	/ 1977	7(5/77)
42	Aerospatiale SA-341 Gazelle Helicopters		2
100	Matra R. 550 Magic AA missiles	to arm F-1's / 1979-	3
?	Matra R. 530 AA missiles	to arm Mirage III's / 1974-76	2
?	Aerospatiale AS. 12 AS missiles	two orders, to arm 24 Commando helicopters / 1974-76, 78	3
?	Thomson-CSF-Matra "Arab Crotale" SA missiles	to replace SAM-6's / 1977-	3
20+	Aerospatiale Transall transports	\$7.2m. each	3
38	Dassault Mirage 5 fighters	to Saudi Arabia for Egypt / 1974-75	1
FRANCE/UK			
42	Aerospatiale/Westland SA-342 Gazelle helicopters	/ 1975-77	3
30-60	Dassault-Brequet/BAC Jaguar Internl. strike/trainers	\$5.5m. each	3
FRANCE/FRG			
40	Dassault-Brequet/Dornier Alpha Jet light striker/trainers	\$3m. each	3
?	Euromissile HOT AT missiles	to arm 42 Gazelle helicopt. / 1976-77	3
FRANCE/ITALY			
30+	Oto Melara/Matra OTOMAT ShSh missiles	in adv.negotiations; to replace "Styx"	3
ITALY/SWITZ.			
20	FFA/SIAI-Marchetti AS-202/18A Bravo trainers	advanced negotiations	3
FR GERMANY			
6	Sportavia Fournier RF-4 light planes	for elec.intell.& artill.spotting / 1975	2
USA/UK			
6	Westland/Sikorsky SH-3D Sea King Mk2 ASW heli.	pd. by Saudi Arabia; on order	3
24	Westland/Sikorsky Commando Mk2 assault heli.	pd. by Saudi Arabia / 1974-76	3
4	Westland/Sikorsky Commando Mk2 heli.	pd. by Saudi Arabia / 1978	3
UK			
4	Westland Sea King helicopters	/ 1974	4
?	BAC Lighting interceptors	UK to Saudi Arabia '65-'69	1
?	BAC Rapier SA missile systems	in negotiation 1975	1
100	HS Hawk fighters	sales propos.; licen.produc.planned	2
250	Westland Lynx helicopters	sales propos.; licen.produc.planned	2
(10,000)	BAC Swingfire At missiles	\$42m.; to mount on Land Rovers / 1975-	2,3
3	Br. Hovercraft Corp. SRN-6 hovercraft	\$2.8m.; 2nd hand; train in UK / 1976	
USA			
6	Lockheed C-130H Hercules transports	to be pd. by Saudi Arabia / 1975-	3
14	Lockheed C-130 transports	ordered in '77; to be pd. by S.Arabia	7(9/77)
12	Teledyne Ryan "Firebee" reconn. drones	\$66.5m.; ordered in '77	7(3/77)
USSR			
48	MiG-23 fighters	/ 1975-	5
?	A-A-2-2 "Atoll" AA missiles	to arm MiG-23's / 1975-	2
(500)	T-62 tanks	Israeli intell.reports / 1974-75	2
?	Artillery and SA missiles	/ 1975	5

SUPPLIER/QTY. TYPE COMMENT/DELIV. DATE SOURCE

TO IRAQ

FRANCE			
31	Aerospatiale Alouette III helicopters		1,2
20	Aerospatiale Alouette III helicopters	brings total to 50 / 1976-77	3
10	Aerospatiale SA-321 Super Frelon heli.	/ 1976-77	3
?	SA-330 Puma helicopters	follow-up order	7(7/77)
?	Aerospatiale AS. 11/12 AS missiles	to arm Alouette III's / 1976-77	3
36	Dassault Mirage F-1 fighters	\$9m.; option on 36 more	3
?	Aerospatiale AS. 11/12 AS missiles	to arm F-1's	7(7/77)
2	patrol boats		3
?	Aerospatiale SS. 11 AT missiles	to arm helicopters	1
FRANCE/UK			
(60)	Aerospatiale/Westland SA-342 Gazelle heli.		3
50±	Dassault-Brequet/3AC Jaguar Internl. fighters		3
UK			
40	HS Hawk Fighters		2
CZECH.			
(60)	Aero L-37 trainers	/ (1976-)	1,2,3
USSR			
40	MiG-23 fighters	/ 1974-75	2,5
30	MiG-21 and 23 fighters	/ 1976	7(7/77)
?	Sukhoi Su-20 aircraft	US intell. reports	1
?	A-A-2-2 "AtoII" AA missiles	to arm MiG-23's / 1974-75	2
(81)	"Scud" SS missiles	/ 1975	2
(10)	"Scud" SS missiles	repeat order / (1976)	3
390	T-55/52 tanks	/ 1974-75	2
?	T-64 tanks	/ (1976)	3
(60)	self-propelled guns	/ 1974-75	2
?	improved AT missiles	/ (1976)	3
?	armored cars		5
?	Mil Mi-8 helicopters	/ (1976)	3
2	"Osa"-class fast missile boats	ex-USSR / 1974	1
?	SS-N-2 "Styx" naval SS missiles	/ 1974	1
?	P-6 torpedo boats		5

TO ISRAEL

USA			
32	Beechcraft Queen Air light transports	two orders / 1974-75	1,2
50	McDonnell-Douglas F-4 Phantom fighters	/ 1974-77	4
35	McDonnell-Douglas F-4 Phantom fighters	/ 1977-	6
25	McDonnell-Douglas F-15 Eagle fighters	total of 50 on order / 1977-78	6
36	McDonnell-Douglas A-4 Skyhawk fighters	total of 287 ordered / 1974-77	2,3,4
(200-400)	General Dynamics F-16 fighters	final US approval undertain / (1980-)	3
4	Grumman E-2C Hawkeye AEW planes	for use with F-15's / 1977-	2,3
?	Grumman OV-1 Mohawk spotter planes	/ 1975	2
8	Lockheed C-130H Hercules transports	/ 1976	3
2	Lockheed KC-130 Hercules tanker/transports	/ 1976-77	3
8	Boeing-Vertol CH-47C Chinook helicopters	/ 1976-77	1,2,3
24	Sikorsky S-61R long-range helicopters	/ 1974	1
8	Sikorsky S-65A helicopters	for electronic intell. / 1975	2
?	Sikorsky CH-53 ELINT helicopters	/ (1977)	3
?	Bell AH-1J/S Cobra helicopters	/ 1975-	2,8(10/13/77)
?	NWC AGM-45A Shrike AS missiles	to arm Kfir fighters / (1975)	2
?	NWC AIM-9J Sidewinder AA missiles	to arm F-4's; (144) deliv. '74 / 1974-77	1,2,3
?	Raytheon AIM-7F Sparrow AA missiles	/ 1975	2
?	Hughes AGM-65A/3 Maverick AS missiles	to arm F-4's & Kfir's / 1976-	3
?	Rockwell Intl. AGM-53A Condor AS missiles	/ (1977)	3
?	Martin AGM-128 Bullpup AS missiles	(144) deliv. 1974 / 1974-77	1,2,3
400	M-48 medium tanks	/ 1975	5
200	M-60 tanks	/ 1974-75	1
400	M-60A1 tanks	/ 1975-76	2
125	M-60A1 tanks	/ 1977	3
?	GE M-163 armored Vulcan A/A gun carriers	in Chaparral system / 1974	1
?	M-741 tracked vehicle	/ 1974	1
?	XR-311 recce. vehicle	to carry TOW AT missiles / 1974	1
?	M-113A1 APC's	to carry TOW AT missiles / (1977)	3
?	155mm howitzers	/ (1977)	3
?	Hughes TOW AT missiles	to arm SR-311's & M-113A1's / 1974-76	1,2,3
?	McDonnell-Douglas FGM-77A Dragon AT missiles	/ 1975-77	3
?	tele-guided AT missiles	incl. ECM equipment / 1975	3
4	Teledyne Ryan/Philco Ford RPV's	incl. ECM equipment / (1977-)	2
?	MIM-72A Chaparral/Vulcan SA missile system	/ 1974	1
?	General Dynamics FIM-43A Redeye SA missiles	/ 1975	2
330	LTV MGM-52C Lance SS missiles	/ 1976-77	3

SUPPLIER/QTY.	TYPE	COMMENT/DELIV. DATE	SOURCE
ISRAEL (cont)			
? 100	Firefish III fast patrol boats McDonnell-Douglas AGM-04A Harpoon ShSh missiles	under construction \$13.5m. / 1977-79	1,2,3 3,10(11/ 7/77)
FR GERMANY 15±	Dornier Do-28 light transports	/ 1974	1
UK 400	Centurion main battle tanks	\$60m; modernized in Israel / 1974-75	1,2
3	IKL/Vickers Type 20', 500 ton	Ger.design; construc. begun '75 / 1977-	2,3
12	Short Blowpipe sub-launched air flight missiles	4 launch each on 3 subs being built	1,2,3

TO JORDAN

USA 30	Northrop F-5A/E fighters	/ 1975-77	2,3,11
18	Northrop F-5E/F fighters	on order	6
7	Northrop F-5F armed trainers	/ 1976-78	11
2	Lockheed C-130 Hercules transports	/ (1977)	3
4	Sikorsky S-70 troop transport helicopters	/ 1978	3,6
?	AWC AIM-9 Sidewinder AA missiles	to arm F-5E's / 1975	2
200	M-49/60 tanks	refurbished / (1977-)	3
700	(M-113A1) APC's	refurbished / (1977-)	3
36	self-propelled 155mm. howitzers	/ 1976-78	11
?	Chaparral SA missile systems		1
532	Raytheon MIM-23B Improved Hawk missiles-14 batts.	\$540m.; to be pd.by S.Arabia / (1977-)	3
100	Gen.Dynamics M-61A1 Vulcan A/A guns-8 batts.	\$87m.; to be pd.by S.Arabia / (1977-)	3
300	Gen.Dynamics FIM-43A Redeye SA missiles	\$5m.; to be pd.by S.Arabia / 1976	3
2340	McDonnell-Douglas Dragon AT missiles	/ 1975-78	11
SPAIN 4	CASA C.212 A/C Aviocar STOL light turboprop trans.	\$1m.; to replace C-47's / 1975-75	2,3
UK 13	Scottish Aviation Bulldog trainers	/ 1974-76	1,2,3

TO LEBANON

FRANCE 13	Aerospatiale Alouette III helicopters	/ 1974	7(1/75)
4	Fouga Magister jet trainers	/ 1974	1
?	Aerospatiale S.11 AT missiles	/ (1975)	2
FR GERMANY 3	patrol boats	one under construc.'77 / (1977-)	1,2,3
ITALY/USA 6	Agusta/Bell AB 212 helicopters	/ 1974-75	1,5
USA ?	Hughes TOW AT missiles	\$10m.; 13 launchers / 1975	2
UK 6	HS Hunter F.77 fighters	refurbished / 1975	2
6	Scottish Aviation Bulldog trainers	/ 1975	2

TO LIBYA

FRANCE 38	Dassault Mirage F-1A/F fighters	/ 1975-	6
?	Matra R.550 Magic AA missiles	to arm F-1's / (1977)	3
?	Matra-CSF/Matra Crotale SA missiles	/ 1975	3
10	PR 72S fast missile boats	\$186m.	3
?	Aerospatiale MM.38 Exocet ShSh missiles	to arm PR 72S's	3
2	tank-landing ships	/ 1977	3
5	Mirage 5 fighters	/ 1974	1
?	Aerospatiale SS11/12 AT missiles	/ 1975	2
FRANCE/SPAIN 4	"Agosta"-class submarines	licensed produc. in Spain	3
FRANCE/ITALY 80	Matra/Oto Melara OTOMAT ShSh missiles	to arm miss. corvettes / 1977-78	3
ITALY 4	missile corvettes	under construc. / 1977-78	3
10	fast miss. boats w/ 76mm. Oto Melara guns	on order	7(6/77)
250+	SIAI-Marchetti SF-250 trainers	/ 1977-	
ITALY/FRG 20	Leopard tanks	Italian newspaper reports / 1976	7(6/77)
ITALY/USA 16	Agusta/Boeing-Vertol C-47C Chinook heli.	1st 2 deliv. 6/76 despite US embargo; train in Italy / 1976-77	3
USA 8	Lockheed C-130H Hercules transports	deliv. blocked by US govt.	3

SUPPLIER/QTY.	TYPE	COMMENT/DELIV. DATE	SOURCE
LIBYA (cont)			
YUGOSLAV.			
?	Soko Galeb G-2A-E trainers	/ 1977	3
USSR			
50	MiG-23 fighters	/ 1975	7(7/77)
12	Tupolev Tu-22 "Blinder" bombers	/ 1975-75	5
12	Mi-8 helicopters	/ 1975	5
?	"Kitchen" AS missiles	to arm Tu-22's / 1976-77	3
?	K-13 "Atoll" AA missiles	to arm MiG-23's / 1975	2
2000	T-62/64 tanks	/ 1974-76	2,3
25	"Scud" tact. battlefield support SS missiles	/ (1976)	3
?	SA 2/3/6 SA missiles	/ 1974-75	2,4,5
6	"Foxtrot"-class submarines	diesel; ex-USSR; built 1963 / 1976-77	3,7(1/77)
24	"Osa"-class fast missile boats	built 1960-65 / 1976-77	3
?	SS-N-2 "Styx" ShSh missiles	to arm "Osa" missile boats / 1975-77	3
?	8TR-53 APC's	/ 1974	1
?	AT-3 "Sagger" AT missiles	/ 1975	2
TO SAUDI ARABIA			
USA			
30	Northrop F-5E fighters	/ 1974	1
110	Northrop F-5B/E/F fighters/trainers	/ 1975-79	2,4
4	Lockheed KC-130H tanker/transport	/ 1974	1
20	Lockheed C-130H Hercules transports	/ 1974-75,77	2,3
400	Bell AH-1 Cobra helicopters	200 deliv. 1976 / 1976-77	3
400	Hughes AGM-65A Maverick AS missiles	to arm F-5's / 1976-79	3
2000	Raytheon AIM-91J Sidewinder AA missiles	\$63m.; to arm F-5's / 1977-	3
250	M-60A1 tanks	/ 1977-	3,6
2400	M-113 APC's	/ 1977-79	7(5/76), 9(1/6/77)
150	V-150 Commando APC's	\$17.5m.; ordered 1976	9(11/25/76)
350±	105mm. howitzers	/ 1977-	3
?	Raytheon MIM-23B Improved Hawk SA missiles	\$1.1m. / 1976-79	3
?	General Electric Vulcan A/A guns	submitted to Congress '76	3
1000	Hughes BGM-71 TOW AT missiles	submitted to Congress '76	3
400	McDonnell-Douglas FGM-77A Dragon AT missiles	submitted to Congress '76	3
8	PGM-type missile boats		3
24	Tacoma-class patrol boats	under construc. / 1979-	3
4	"332"-class coastal minesweepers	/ 1978	3
6	large patrol boats		3
2	coastal patrol boats		3
3	training ships		3
4	LCT-type landing ships		3
117	McDonnell-Douglas AGM-84A Harpoon ShSh missiles	to arm Tacoma patrol boats / 1979	3
USA/JAPAN			
6	Boeing-Vertol/Kawasaki KV-107-11 heli.	licen.prod.in Jap.; equip.for naval bomb.	7(6/77)
UK			
11	BAC 147 Strikemaster Mk81 trainer/COIN aircraft		3
?	BAC Rapier SA missiles		3,5
?	Fox armored cars		3,4
250	Scorpion light tanks		3,4
PAKISTAN			
(8)	(warships)	(\$1.45m.; under construc.)	1,2
ITALY			
?	A/A guns	\$195.6m.	5
FR GERMANY			
600	Rheinstahl Marder APC's	nego.stop due to FRG arms embargo	3
FRANC/FRG			
?	Aerospatiale/M8B Euromiss. Roland AT miss.	\$19m.; to arm Panhard arm.cars / (1980-)	2,3
FRANCE			
38	Dassault Mirage III-E fighters	/ 1975-78	2
34	Aerospatiale Alouette III helicopters	/ (1974-76,77-)	3
48	Dassault Mirage 5 fighters		3
?	Matra R550 Magic AA missiles	\$3m.; to arm f-5's, Mirage III's / 1975-	2
200	AMX-30 medium tanks	some Crotale miss. carriers / 1975-79	2,3
250	AMX-10 light tanks/armored cars	/ 1975-79	2,3
?	AMX-30 SA self-propelled A/A guns		3
(2000)	Aerospatiale SS.11 AT missiles	to arm AMX-30's / 1975-79	2,3
(2000)	Aerospatiale Harpoon AT missiles	to arm AMX-30's / 1975-79	2,3
?	Matra-CSF-Thomson Crotale "Chahinn" SA miss.	to arm AMX-30's/ 6 miss.each / 1975-79	1,2
?	frigates		4
?	minesweepers		4

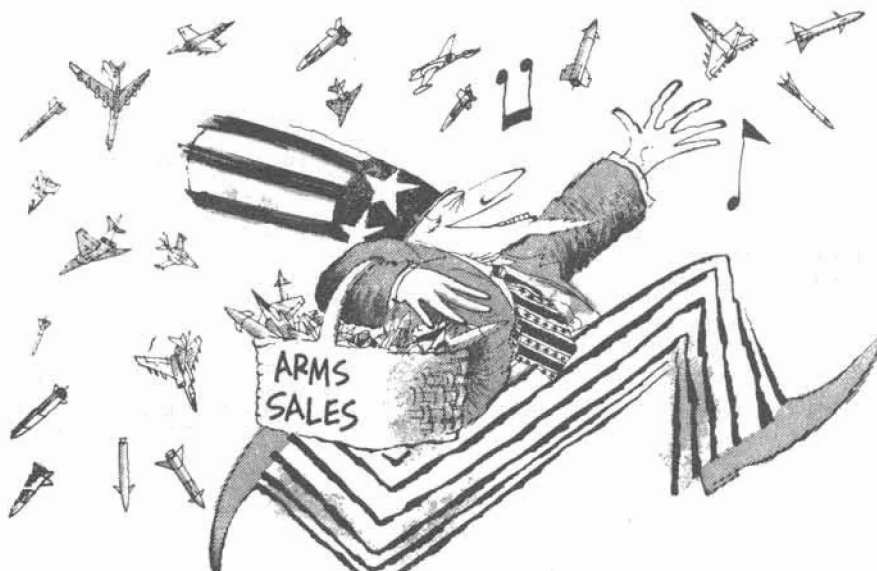
SUPPLIER/QTY.	TYPE	COMMENT/DELIV. DATE	SOURCE
TO SYRIA			
USSR			
130	MiG-21 fighters	/ 1974-75	5
45	MiG-23 fighters	/ 1974-75	5
25	Sukoi Su-7 fighter/ground attack	/ 1974	1
?	Kamov Ka-25 "Hormone" ASW helicopter	in add. to previous 9	3
320	T-62 tanks	/ 1974-75	1,2
500±	T-55 tanks	/ (1977-79)	3
?	PT-76 light tanks	/ 1974-75	5
110	BTR-50 APC's	/ 1974	1
6000±	AT-3 "Sagger" AT missiles	/ 1974-75	2
?	SAM-2/3/5 SA missiles	48 batts reported deliv. / (1976)	3
?	SAM-7 SA missiles	US intell. reports / 1974	1
(?)	(SAM-9 SA missiles)	(latest version w/ECM / 1975)	2
30	SS-1C "Scud" long range SA missiles	/ 1974	1
?	Frog-7 SS missiles	24 launchers reported deliv. / (1976)	3
?	SS-12 "Scaleboard" SS missiles		3
6	"Osa"-class missile boats	/ 1974-75	2
?	SS-N-2A "Styx" ShSh missiles	to arm "Osa" boats / 1974-75	2
FRANCE			
15	Aerospatiale SA-321G Super Frelon	/ 1977-	3,7(5/77)
2000±	(Aerospatiale SS.11/Harpon AT missiles)		2
FRANCE/FRG			
2000±	Euromissile HOT/Milan AT missiles	to arm helicopters / 1977-	3,7(5/77)
FRANCE/UK			
?	Aerospa./West. SA-342 Gazelle observ.helic.	/ 1977-	3,7(5/77)
USA/ITALY			
18	Agusta/Bell 212 ASW helicopters	/ 1977-	3,7(5/77)
6	Agusta/Boeing-Vertol CH-47C Chinook helicopters	/ 1977-	3,7(5/77)
12±	Agusta/Sikorsky SH-3D Sea King helicopters	/ 1977-	3,7(5/77)
6	Agusta/Sikorsky AS-61A-4 helicopters	/ 1977-	3,7(5/77)
ITALY			
24	Agusta A-109 Hirundo helicopters	/ 1977-	3,7(5/77)
SPAIN/FRG			
32	CASA/MBB 223 kl Flamingo trainers	/ 1974	7(8/76)
16	CASA/MBB 223 kl Flamingo trainers		7(8/76)

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Notes:

() = source is uncertain as to exact data
AS = Air-to-surface missile
AA = Air-to-air missile
AT = anti-tank missile
A/A = anti-aircraft
ShSh = Ship-to-ship missile
SS = Surface-to-surface missile
APC = Armored personnel carrier
ECM = Electronic countermeasures
AEW = Airborne early warning
ASW = Anti-submarine warfare
STOL = Short take-off and landing



"A tisket, a tasket. . ."

By Auth for the Philadelphia Inquirer

CURRENT EVENTS

FRANCE ATTACKS POLISARIO

The two-year old struggle of the Polisario Front against the Moroccan/Mauretanian takeover of the former Spanish Sahara took a new turn in December. French planes dropped napalm and phosphorus bombs on Polisario guerrillas returning from an attack on the Mauretanian railroad, causing the heaviest casualties in a single Polisario raid, as well as killing 49 Mauretanian prisoners.

French planes were sent to Senegal (which borders Mauretania) earlier in 1977 to pressure the Polisario and Algeria to release eight French hostages captured by the Front during a raid on the Mauretanian mining center of Zouerate in May. Attempts to obtain the release of the hostages had been hampered by France's refusal to negotiate directly with the Polisario, as this would have implied French recognition of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic. The French instead claimed that it was Algeria's responsibility to secure the hostages' release.

The Polisario has announced that all French citizens working in Mauretania or Morocco will be treated as mercenaries if captured. European supporters of the Polisario criticize this policy for failing to distinguish between French troops 'advising' the poorly trained Mauretanian army, and French people working in a non-military capacity—although one of the hostages admitted after his release that he had been repairing Mauretanian army equipment. The release of the hostages was announced by the French Communist Party leader, Georges Marchais, during a visit to Algeria. This considerably annoyed French President Giscard d'Estaing, who will be fighting an election this year against a socialist-communist alliance. Significantly, the bombing of the Polisario column came immediately after Polisario agreed to release the hostages, belieing French government claims that they regarded the question of the hostages as a humanitarian issue.

It is unlikely that France will send troops to fight the Polisario given the closeness of this year's elections. But it is clear that the Polisario is now going to have to fight not only Morocco and Mauretania but also France. The Polisario has used their familiarity with the terrain to make surprise attacks on isolated and vulnerable Mauretanian targets. Mauretania simply does not have enough troops to guard all strategic points in the country. But with French planes carrying out reconnaissance missions to locate Polisario columns, Mauretania will be able to move its troops to possible targets, while French and Moroccan planes strafe and bomb the Polisario.

Relations between Algeria and France are likely to worsen, making Algerian workers in France even more vulnerable to attacks from racist right-wing groups. Already, the murder of one Algerian worker has been linked to the Polisario's holding of French hostages. Responsibility for Laid Sebai's murder on December 2 was claimed by Delta, a right-wing terrorist organization that had been active in France during the Algerian independence struggle. The French government's lack of concern at this murder, which was at first dismissed as a private settling of accounts, will not make Algerians in France, who are already afraid to leave their homes at night, feel any more secure.

Nigel Disney

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Development, Income Distribution and Social Change in Rural Egypt (1952-1970): A Study in the Political Economy of Agrarian Transition. by Mahmoud Abdel-Fadil. Cambridge University Press, London, 1975. xiv + 157 pp. with appendices. Paperback.

This monograph is "an appraisal of the socio-economic transformations brought about in rural Egypt under Nasser's regime." (p. 1) Chapters cover the land reforms and resulting transformation of agrarian structure, differentiation of the peasantry, shifts in income distribution, changes in consumption patterns and standards of living in rural areas, governmental policies on co-operatives, pricing and procurement of farm produce, and basic trends and the process of out-migration. While short, the study has many facets and just several of the main trends will be treated here.

Abdel-Fadil has based his study solidly on statistical data. While the tables and charts seem forbidding at first glance, they are clearly presented and can be understood quite easily. There are serious limitations to much of the data and Abdel-Fadil carefully points these out. Most of his conclusions are not new or startling, but this work represents the most advanced effort to ground those conclusions in concrete data.

After briefly describing the rural situation in Egypt prior to 1952, Abdel-Fadil discusses the land reforms. Here he is comprehensive and clear. He notes that the principal aim of the reforms was

to abolish the large estates and to create a vast class of small-holders. Thus, the reform was, in principle and practice, more akin to the liberal ideal of 'a regime of small peasant properties' rather than any *collectivist* or *socialistic* ideals. (p. 23)

Thus, it is not surprising that rather than significantly improving the position of the small peasants, the reforms have resulted in the creation of a new powerful class of rich farmers. Politically,

since the 1952 revolution the major change in the village-level power structure has been the replacement of one class of notables by another, while small and poor peasants made very limited progress in assuming political leadership roles. (p. 121)

A central element in the study is Abdel-Fadil's analysis of the differentiation of the peasantry. This is strikingly reminiscent of Lenin's classic *Development of Capitalism in Russia*. He uses divergent measures which yield consistent results in portraying social differentiation in rural Egypt. A broad strati-

fication based on size of land-holding gives five classes: 1) landless peasants, 2) poor peasants, 3) small peasants, 4) middle peasants, and 5) rich peasants or capitalist farmers. While the rich peasants have benefited most from changes in the countryside, there have been improvements for the middle and small peasants also.

Nonetheless, in *structural* terms, the basic dualism in the agrarian system remains inviolate, and the new agrarian changes did not help much to solve the *structural* problems of the landless and poor peasants—sustaining themselves on minute plots of land. (p. 49)

Abdel-Fadil then investigates the impact of reforms and differentiation on income distribution. It is here that the limitations in the data are most pronounced. Aside from the ambiguities and inadequacies of official statistics, the latest reliable data is for 1961. While the small and landless peasants made gains as a result of income redistribution, the rich and middle peasants benefited the most. Abdel-Fadil sees this redistribution as furthering the development of the home market and the productive forces in Egyptian society. To some extent this is undoubtedly true, but certainly some skepticism seems called for.

Abdel-Fadil's other analyses fit into the overall picture. There were improvements in the rural areas, but these were limited and did not significantly improve the position of the lower groups. In fact,

the rising number of landless households since the mid-1960s suggests the spectre of a new agrarian crisis, . . . caused by the exhaustion of the equalising effects of the land redistribution programme as well as the failure of the supply of new cultivable land to keep pace with rapid population growth. (p. 117)

The picture emerging from his analysis is one of "greater polarisation of the differentiated peasantry" (p. 118) and "sharpening class contradictions between the poor peasantry and landless peasants on one hand, and the rich peasantry on the other." (p. 123) Recent events in Egypt confirm these conclusions.*

In sum, Abdel-Fadil's study should be of interest to those wanting an overall assessment of rural social change in Egypt, and to those interested in processes of social change in the Third World, more generally. He is working on a similar study of the urban sector, which, along with this study, will provide much data for analysis of Egyptian society.

Walter Carroll

*See "Egypt in Crisis," *MERIP Reports* no. 56.

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